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H I S T O R Y

O F

Jemmy and Jenny Jeffamy.

BY MRS. HAYWOOD.

IN THREE VOLUMES.



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THE

H I S T O R Y

OF

JEMMY AND JENNY JESSAMY.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAP. I.

MAY MORE PROPERLY BE CALLED
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EN-
SUING HISTORY, THAN PART OF
IT.



JEMMY and Jenny Jessamy were originally descended from two male branches of the same family, as it may be reasonably supposed, they

both being of the same name, and having the same escutcheon; but to trace how far the relationship between them was removed, would require much time and trouble in examining old records, memorandums, and church-registers, and cost more than the acquisition would be worth, as it could not be found any way material to the history.

It shall therefore suffice to say, that Jemmy was the only son of a gentleman of a competent estate, and Jenny sole daughter and heiress of a wealthy merchant; that their parents had always called cousins, had lived with each other in the most perfect friendship, the tokens of which each seemed equally desirous should continue beyond the grave; and, to this end, resolved on a marriage between their children, pro-

vided that, when they arrived at years of maturity, neither of them should have any objection to such an union.

As this agreement was very early made, and the accomplishment of it was seriously wished for by both parties, all imaginable care was taken to excite in the children a mutual affection for each other, and to make the name of Love familiar to them long before they knew what was meant by the word, much less could have any notion of the passion; depending on this maxim of the poet—

‘Children, like tender osiers, take the bow;
‘And, as they first are fashion’d, still will
‘grow.’

Jemmy, who had four years the advantage of Jenny, was taught to call her his little wife, even while in her cradle; and Jenny no sooner began to speak, than she was made to say the loved her husband Jemmy in her heart.

As their years increased, and they became capable of receiving the first rudiments of education befitting their different sexes, Jemmy was sent to Eton, and Jenny to a boarding-school at a small village not far from London: but, to atone for this separation, they were instructed, by those who had the care of them, to write little epistles to

each other, which they dictated in terms suitable to their age and innocence, and served to keep alive that spirit of affection which had been inculcated in their more early infancy. When the times of breaking-up allowed them to return to their friends, they were seldom asunder; they partook together all those diversions prepared for them by their indulgent parents; and sometimes Jemmy, and sometimes Jenny, were at the head of the feast, all others being but their invited guests. Jemmy was continually presenting Jenny with some curious and new-invented toy; and the first-fruits of Jenny's handy-work was a fine embroidered waistcoat and cap for Jemmy.

By this means it became a kind of second nature in them to love each other: the affection they began in infancy grew up with their years; and if what they felt as they approached nearer to maturity did not amount to a passion, it was, at least, somewhat more than is ordinarily found between a brother and a sister.

The two fathers, however, were highly contented with the effect their endeavours had produced in the hearts of their children; and doubted not but, by the prudent measures that had been taken in the education of both, they should one day see them make very shining figures in the state of marriage; which they resolved should be delayed no longer than till Jemmy had arrived at the age of one-and-twenty, at which time Jenny would be some months past seventeen.

But how uncertain is life! How fallible the prospects it presents! It often happens that, when they seem most near, they either vanish of themselves, or we are suddenly snatched from them. The father of Jenny, though a man whose healthy constitution, according to all appearance, promised a much longer date, died in an apoplectick fit; and she became an orphan three years before the time prefixed for the completion of her marriage.

This fatal accident must necessarily involve the tender and affectionate heart of this young girl in very great affliction; but it was less severely felt, as she had always been bred to look on the father of Jemmy as a second parent to herself: she therefore hesitated not

to commit the large fortune she was left mistress of entirely to his care, and chose him for her guardian, according to the forms of law.

Soon after her father's death, finding she had attained all those accomplishments that could be taught her in a boarding-school, she removed from thence; and, with the approbation of her guardian, went to live with a family where she had a much better opportunity of seeing the world, and knowing how to conform herself to the customs and manners of it, than ever she could have done by the precise rules observed in the place she came from.

Jemmy had some time before left Eton, and was gone to Oxford in order to finish his studies; but he obtained leave from the head of the college to make frequent visits to London, induced thereto by the double obligation of testifying his duty to his father and affection to his mistress. To these two motives, a third, perhaps, might be added, equally prevalent with either of the former; that of partaking the pleasures of the town, of which he was no less fond than most others of his sex and age.

He was but just returned to the university, from whence he had made a pretty long excursion, when he was suddenly recalled to London. The old gentleman was seized with a pleurettick fever; which, notwithstanding all the remedies proper in such cases were applied, made so swift a progress towards his heart, as threatened an immediate dissolution. It indeed proved so; for though Jemmy, on the melancholy news, took horse the same moment, and rode post to town, he arrived but just time enough to see this best of fathers breathe his last.

The pangs of death were on him, yet were his senses perfect. On his son's approach, a gleam of satisfaction diffused itself throughout all his late disordered features: he collected all the strength that was left in him to raise himself a little; and, taking hold of Jemmy's hand, and joining it to that of Jenny's, who sat weeping by the bed-side—'My dear children,' said he, 'I regret the loss of life for nothing so much as because I shall be deprived of seeing that happiness which, I hope, you will soon enjoy together.'

He

He would have added something more; but his voice forsook him, and he expired that instant.

Few young heirs look upon any thing as a real matter of affliction which makes them masters of themselves and fortunes. But Jemmy was of a different way of thinking: he had a great share both of good sense and good-nature; and, besides what filial duty demanded from him, love and gratitude for the indulgences with which he had always been treated by his father, made him lament his loss with the most unfeigned and poignant sorrow.

Jenny was also very deeply affected at this event: she had been truly sensible of the value she ought to set upon so faithful a guardian, and so sincere a friend; and, while she used her endeavours to give his son some consolation, stood in almost equal need of receiving it herself.

The prudent old gentleman, though perhaps without any apprehensions of being so near his end, had some months before made his will; by which it appeared, on examination, that he had appointed trustees to manage both for his son and intended daughter-in-law, in case he should die before they arrived at the age of acting for themselves; and also that, by his great œconomy, he had saved, out of the receipts of his estates, several considerable sums of money, which he had placed in the publick funds; so that Jemmy found himself in possession of a much larger fortune than he had imagined, or had been made to hope for.

Soon after the melancholy solemnity of the funeral was over, he returned to Oxford; but staid no longer there than was necessary to take a decent leave of the gentlemen of the college, and other students with whom he had contracted the most intimacy.

But none of his friends or acquaintance either wondered at or condemned the haste he made to quit the university, not doubting but the sole motive of his doing so was the laudable affection for the lady intended to be his future bride.

CHAP. II.

CONTAINS THE NARRATIVE OF A
VERY ODD ADVENTURE, BUT
PERFECTLY A-PROPOS, THOUGH

AT PRESENT IT MAY PERHAPS
APPEAR A LITTLE FOREIGN TO
THE BUSINESS IN HAND.

DURING the short time that Jemmy staid at Oxford, his fair mistress took it into her head to make a visit to a friend in the country, about some one or two and twenty miles distant from London; where she had received several pressing invitations to come, but had been hitherto prevented from complying by one accident or other.

This was a young lady for whom Jenny had as great a regard as for any one of her female acquaintance; they had received part of their education together: and though Sophia, for so she was called, being somewhat older than Jenny, had much sooner left the school, yet their intimacy was not broken off by this separation; and they continued to see each other as often as opportunity permitted. But the brother of Sophia, who was a bachelor, having prevailed with his sister to come down, and take upon her the management of his house, had now occasioned between these ladies an absence for many months.

It is not, therefore, to be doubted, but that Jenny found herself very sincerely welcome. Sophia omitted nothing that might convince her that she was so; and as nothing more truly demonstrates the cordiality of the heart than an open and undisguised behaviour, these ladies reciprocally related to each other all the little accidents that had befallen either of them since last they parted.

Among other things that Sophia communicated to her fair guest, she told her that her brother was about marrying, and at present was in London prosecuting his addresses for that purpose to a young lady of condition: 'Which,' said she, 'if he succeeds in, I shall not long be resident in the country, as he then will have no farther occasion for my assistance; nor should I chuse to continue in the house with a sister-in-law.'

'I sincerely wish him all the happiness he can hope for,' replied Jenny, 'not only as he is your brother, but for his own sake also; since I believe there are few men who deserve more.' — 'We are both extremely obliged to you,

‘you, my dear,’ returned the other;
 ‘but I fear—’

She was going on with something which, it is likely, would have let Jenny into the quality and character of the intended bride; but was interrupted by a servant, who came hastily into the room, and told her that his master was just alighted at the gate out of a landau and six, and had brought a very fine lady home with him.

‘Bless me!’ cried Sophia, in a great surprise, ‘the thing we were speaking of is certainly compleated! But, come,’ continued she, ‘let us go down to receive them, and be convinced.’

In speaking these words she took Jenny by the hand, in order to do as she had said; but was prevented by the sight of her brother and the mistress of his affections, who had come laughing up, and were already on the top of the stair-case; on which she retired some paces back, to give them room to enter.

This gentleman, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Rodophil, immediately presented Sophia to the lady, saying—‘This, Madam, is the sister I have often mentioned to you.’ They then saluted each other with a great deal of politeness, while he paid his compliments to Jenny; but had no sooner done so, than, turning to Sophia—‘I am come a little unexpectedly upon you, sister,’ said he; ‘but, to make amends, have brought home a lady, who will be so good as to take off your hands the trouble of managing my family.’

‘I am very ready to resign my place,’ replied she with a smile, ‘to one who, I doubt not, will much better fit it: but, Sir,’ pursued she, in the same gay air, ‘I think you should have put it in my power to have given you the last cast of my office in a more elegant manner than I am now capable of doing in this sudden surprize.’

‘Nay, as to that matter, child,’ cried the lady in a very familiar, and indeed somewhat of a hoydenish tone, ‘you have nothing to accuse him of on this account; for I assure you neither of us thought of being here to-night, two hours before we set out from London: but I know not how it happened, but we were both in a frolicksome humour; he swore he would

‘have me, and I swore if he had, he should run away with me: the impudent thing took me at my word, sent in a minute for a landau and six, thrust me into it, and hurried me away without any farther preparation than just as you see.’

‘Then the ceremony is not yet performed,’ said Sophia. ‘No,’ replied her brother; ‘but I hope to-morrow morning will put a final end to my suspense, and make me happy in my utmost wishes.—What say you, Madam,’ pursued he to the lady; ‘shall it not be so?’—‘What occasion has the man to ask any questions?’ answered she, patting him on the cheek; ‘you have got me into your possession here, and must even do with me what you will.’

Soon after this Sophia withdrew, to give the necessary orders for preparing supper; which, in spite of being taken so unawares, was served up in a manner that shewed there was little need of the apology she had made on the first entrance of her new guest.

Nothing was wanting to compleat the elegance of the table, but a little more politeness of behaviour in the person for whom chiefly such care had been taken in furnishing it: but though she was the daughter of a nobleman, and could not fail of having had an education suitable to her birth; yet the pride of blood, the insolence of flattered beauty, and the vanity of imagining that she could do nothing unbecoming in her, made her act and talk in so affected and so odd a manner, as greatly defaced all the charms she had received from Nature.

‘You are very ugly, Rodophil,’ would she cry; ‘I wonder what it is I like you for!’ then rejoined with the same breath—‘Well, you are a dear bewitching toad, however!’ One moment she would push him from her, swearing she hated him; the next pull him towards her, protesting he could not be too near. Her discourse to the ladies was also of the same piece: she told Sophia, she had a pair of fine eyes, but did not look as if she knew she had any such things in her head; and laughed at Jenny, as having reason to accuse Nature for not having endued her with the talent of elocution.

Jenny, indeed, spoke but little the whole evening; but as her silence was occasioned

occasioned by the other's excess of volubility, the usual vivacity of her temper was roused by this reproach; and she replied with some tartness—'Madam, if Sophia and myself were half so conscious as your ladyship seems to be of having every thing we said approved of, we should certainly be all speakers, and no hearers; and consequently this gentleman here in danger of losing one of his senses, if a man in love can be supposed to have any.'

The lady, in spite of all the assurance she was possessed of, could not avoid appearing a little disconcerted at what Jenny had said. Rodophil perceiving it, thought himself obliged, as a lover, to take up the word; and, turning to Jenny—'Madam,' said he to her, 'the man who has the honour to be capable of distinguishing the perfections of that lady must certainly be supposed to have no senses for any thing but her.'

Jenny made no other reply to this, than she doubted not but his passion was worthy of the object that inspired it; and, after a few hours passed in a conversation not material enough to be repeated, Sophia conducted the mistress of her brother to an apartment she had caused to be got ready for her; and, through respect to him, waited in the room till she had seen her into bed.

Jenny having always been a sharer with Sophia in the same bed, when they were together at the boarding-school, would not hear of sleeping apart from her during the time she stayed in the country; not only to avoid giving any unnecessary trouble to the family, but also because she was willing to lose as little of her company as possible.

Though the night was pretty far advanced when the ladies went into their chamber, neither of them had the power to close their eyes without discovering to the other some part of their sentiments in relation to the intended bride.

That a young maid of quality should suffer herself to be conducted in so odd a manner by a gentleman to his country seat; and that she should behave towards him in so affected, and indeed so confident a manner, in the presence of two persons of her own sex whom she had never seen before; had something in it so new, and so strange to them,

that they could not well find words to express their astonishment.

'It must certainly be an excess of love,' said Jenny, 'that can oblige a man of Rodophil's good understanding to bear with such extravagances in the woman he makes choice of for a wife.'

'As for love,' replied the other, 'I believe that is quite out of the question; I think I may be pretty positive, from a thousand circumstances, that my brother is neither charmed with the beauties of her person, nor blind to the follies of her temper; but he imagines (how rightly I cannot as yet take upon me to determine) that her fortune, her birth, and the interest of her family, will compensate for all other deficiencies.'

Women, for the most part, are but too justly accused of being severe on the foibles of each other; and some will have it, that they even take a malicious pleasure in finding something to condemn. But it was not by this propensity that either of these ladies was instigated: the one, who loved her brother extremely, was sorry and ashamed at having observed such errors in a woman who was to be his partner for life; and the other, more through good-nature than the contrary, was vexed when any opportunity for censure presented itself.

Rodophil, however, full of the thoughts of being a bridegroom, quitted his bed much sooner than he was accustomed to do, and went to a neighbouring clergyman, who having licences always ready by him, got one immediately filled up with the two parties names; and as the thing was to be private, promised to bring a friend with him, who should officiate in giving the lady's hand.

Sophia also rose very early that morning; being willing, in spite of her dislike to this match, to do it all the honour in her power, and that the shortness of the time would admit of.

None of the family were sluggards on this occasion; all appeared in their several stations alert and cheerful; sprightliness sat on every face, except that of the intended bride. But never was there so strange, so sudden a transformation in any one person: she that had the evening before been so wildly

gay and volatile, even to a ridiculous excess, was now become quite moped and stupid; twice had Sophia been in her chamber before she could prevail on her to leave it to come down stairs; and when Rodophil accosted her with the usual salutation of the morning, and told her it was the happiest he had ever seen, she made no answer, nor scarce vouchsafed to look upon him.

On the sight of the clergyman and his friend, who came exactly at the time they were expected by Rodophil—'What is all this for?' said she suddenly; 'I will not be married.'—'Not married, Madam!' cried Rodophil; 'you are not certainly in earnest.'—'Indeed but I am: so pray let the parson go about his business; for he has none with me at this time.'

'What is it you mean, Madam?' demanded Rodophil, so much confounded that he could scarce utter these few words. 'I have told you,' answered she, 'that I will not be married, at least at present; therefore send away the man.'

'I am sorry, Sir,' said the reverend divine, 'that you did not take care to be better acquainted with the lady's mind before you gave us the trouble of waiting on you:' and with these words went hastily out of the room, followed by the gentleman he had brought with him, equally affronted as surprised.

Rodophil went after them, to make the best apology he could for the caprice, as he then imagined it, of the lady's humour. Sophia and Jenny were all this time in such a consternation, that they could only look sometimes on the person who had occasioned it, and sometimes on each other, without being able to speak a single syllable.

Rodophil returned; and, with a countenance which testified the resentment of his heart—'Madam,' said he to the lady, 'what have I done to deserve that you should treat me in this manner? What motive could induce you to render me the jest of the whole country?'—

'If you thought me unworthy of the honour I solicited,' pursued he, 'wherefore did you encourage me to hope it? Assign at least some reason for so strange a reverse in your behaviour towards me.' These questions, and several others to the same purpose, being repeated over and over, she at last

replied, that she would satisfy him, but nobody else.

Sophia, on hearing this, started immediately from her seat, crying—'Oh, Madam! we will be no hindrance to the eclaireissement my brother has so much right to expect.' In speaking this she left them together, taking Jenny with her.

Her curiosity was, however, raised to a pitch too high not to inspire her with an eagerness to be one of the first at the explanation of this mystery: it presently came into her head, that there was a closet which opened from the passage, and was divided from the room where Rodophil and the lady were but by a thin partition; and guessing her friend's impatience by her own, they both went together, as softly as possible, into this little recess; where, putting their ears close to the pannel of the wainscot, they could easily distinguish what discourse passed on the other side.

As in reaching this place they were obliged to take a circuit through a gallery of a pretty large extent, they lost some part of what had been said, but arrived time enough to be witnesses of the main point, and to which all that had passed before could have been only the prelude.

'Married!' they heard Rodophil cry, with a voice sonorous enough to have been audible at a much greater distance, 'Death and Furies! when, where, to whom?'—'You have no occasion,' replied the lady, 'to put yourself into this violent agitation; I dare say I may be easily unmarried again.'

'Confusion!' rejoined Rodophil; 'what trifling is here! Married, and may be easily unmarried again! For Heaven's sake, Madam, explain the meaning of all this, if there be really any meaning in what you say!'

'Have a little patience,' replied she; 'I will tell you every thing. You must know, that Captain La Val persuaded me one day to go with him to May-Fair Chapel, where a man in a black coat read something over to us; it was the marriage-ceremony, I think: for my part, I did nothing but laugh all the time, yet the creature has ever since taken it into his head to imagine I am his wife.'

'Very likely, indeed,' said Rodophil scornfully: 'and what followed?'—

'Nay,

'Nay, what signifies what followed?' cried she: 'the business is to get this foolish marriage dissolved; which I think may easily be done, especially as there were no witnesses, and we now heartily hate one another.'—'Were these always your sentiments?' demanded Rodophil. 'No,' answered she; 'he pretended a furious passion for me, and I liked him well enough; but he is now as indifferent as most other husbands, and I have never been able to endure him since I came acquainted with you: therefore, my dear Rodophil, help me to get quite rid of him.'

'As how, pray?' said he. 'Oh, I have contrived the means,' answered she—'you must send him a challenge; I know he does not love fighting, though he has made two campaigns, and I believe will be glad to relinquish me rather than come to tilt-work: but if he should venture, you will certainly have the better; for I am told he does not understand the sword.'

'I am highly obliged to you, Madam,' replied he, with the extreme disdain, 'for the undertaking you would engage me in; but really it is not my humour to risque my own throat, or attempt cutting that of another man, in the hope of becoming master of his property: and I am so far from envying the good fortune of my rival, that I wish him all the happiness a man can enjoy with a lady of your consummate virtue and discretion.'

'Ungrateful creature!' cried she, bursting into tears, 'is this the love you have professed for me, or a recompense for the proofs you have received of mine?'—'Oh, Madam,' replied he, still more contemptuously, 'you will find I know how to set a just value on such love as yours; the landau that brought us is not yet returned, and is at your service, to conduct you to your husband's arms, or wherever you think proper.'

On this she called him Monster, Villain, and all the names that rage and disappointment could suggest; but he, little regarding what she said, rung the bell for a servant, and ordered the landau should be immediately brought. Our fair eye-droppers thought this a proper cue for entrance, and came forth from their concealment: 'Sister,' said

Rodophil, 'I leave you to take care of this lady, who seems a little disordered; I am going out.'

Sophia, after her brother had left the room, began to say some civil things, in order to moderate the distraction she appeared in: but she answered not a word; and as soon as the landau was at the gate, flung herself into it without any farther ceremony. But what effect her behaviour had on the minds of those she left behind, the reader will presently discover.

CH A P. III.

IS OF STILL MORE IMPORTANCE
THAN THE FORMER.

THOUGH Rodophil, as Sophia had told Jenny, was not possessed of any real passion for this capricious lady, and had been instigated merely by the prospect of advantage to make his addresses to her; yet was he so much chagrined at being exposed, by her folly, to the ridicule of the neighbourhood, from the thought it could not be kept a secret, that he went directly to the house of an intimate friend, and would not be prevailed upon to return to his own for a considerable time.

As for the two young ladies, the consternation they were in at what they had seen and heard, is not to be described: nothing but the conviction of their own senses could have made either of them believe it possible, that a person, such as had just now left them, could have acted in the manner she had done.

The discourse they had together, after she was gone, was suitable to the occasion: 'I know,' said Sophia, 'that there are some men who have so much vanity and assurance, that they will take no denial, nor quit their pretensions without some extraordinary method be taken to compel them to it; but I can assure you this was not the case with my brother. I have very good reasons to believe she made him the first advances; and am certain that, if she did not, she at least highly encouraged his addresses.'

'That you may not think,' continued she, 'that I am excited to speak in this manner through the natural affection to my brother, I will shew you a letter, which he happening to

‘ drop, I took up, and never returned;
 ‘ because I was unwilling to let him
 ‘ know I had seen it.’

In speaking these words, she took a paper out of her pocket, and put it into Jenny’s hands; which the young lady hastily opening, found the contents as follow.

TO ***** , ESQ.

‘ I Have had a thousand lovers, but
 ‘ never found one so easily repul-
 ‘ sed: if you had loved me with half
 ‘ that violent passion you pretended,
 ‘ you would have remembered what the
 ‘ poet makes Jupiter say of our sex—

“ I gave them but one tongue to form denials,
 “ And two fine eyes to yield a kind compli-
 “ ance.”

‘ Mine must have been very unintel-
 ‘ ligible, indeed, if they did not inform
 ‘ you that my heart was far from being
 ‘ displeased at the fine things you said
 ‘ to me: were you then to take it for
 ‘ granted that I did not like you, be-
 ‘ cause I told you so, and gallop im-
 ‘ mediately out of town, as if absolute-
 ‘ ly despairing ever to obtain me?
 ‘ Faint-hearted creature! I pity your
 ‘ want of spirit; a man of courage
 ‘ would have been more enflamed by
 ‘ resistance, and never have given over
 ‘ till he had gained his point.

‘ I know this is going a great length,
 ‘ and may encourage you to boldnesses
 ‘ which, perhaps, I should not be very
 ‘ ready to forgive: but I have said it,
 ‘ and do not think it worth while to
 ‘ spoil another piece of paper with
 ‘ writing to you in a different manner;
 ‘ so you must put what construction you
 ‘ please upon words. If you venture
 ‘ to town again upon the receipt of
 ‘ this, it is possible you will have no
 ‘ reason to repent your journey; but I
 ‘ promise nothing farther, than that it
 ‘ depends entirely on yourself to con-
 ‘ tinue in the good graces of

*****.

‘ P. S. I have made an appointment
 ‘ with some ladies to go to Vaux-
 ‘ hall the day after to-morrow:
 ‘ they will have all their pretty
 ‘ fellows with them; and, if you
 ‘ come time enough, I should chuse

‘ rather that you should squire me
 ‘ thither than any other man of
 ‘ my acquaintance. Adieu!’

‘ Upon this summons,’ said Sophia,
 ‘ my brother went directly to London;
 ‘ and you may suppose met with no un-
 ‘ kind reception from the lady, by
 ‘ what you have been witness of.’

‘ Yes, my dear,’ cried Jenny, ‘ I
 ‘ have indeed been witness of much
 ‘ more than I could have ever imagined
 ‘ in a woman, much less in any one
 ‘ who pretends to the least share of ho-
 ‘ nour or reputation.’

This adventure, it is certain, had made a very extraordinary impression on the mind of that young beauty; she had a strong discernment, and an uncommon quickness of apprehension; she had easily discovered, that the lady they were speaking of, though vain and affected to an excess, wanted not wit, but judgment; and that the errors of her conduct, in regard to La Val and Rodophili, were not owing so much to her folly, as to the inconstancy of her nature.

‘ Who can be assured,’ said she with-
 in herself, ‘ till experience convinces
 ‘ them, that they themselves may not
 ‘ be guilty of the same irregularity of
 ‘ humour, though their prudence and
 ‘ the fears of censure may keep them
 ‘ from exposing the weakness of their
 ‘ resolution? We all of us are liable
 ‘ to change in trifling matters, and fre-
 ‘ quently despise to-morrow what we
 ‘ liked to-day: I see no reason, there-
 ‘ fore, that we have to depend on our
 ‘ own hearts in things of the greatest
 ‘ importance.’

Jenny could not, in spite of the gaiety of her temper, forbear falling into little reveries of this nature, whenever she considered herself as entering into a state from which there is no relief but the grave; or, what to a woman of any delicacy is yet worse, a divorcement.

She could not keep herself from uttering some part of her thoughts on this subject to Sophia. ‘ Inconstancy,’ replied she, ‘ is certainly a very great
 ‘ weakness; yet what security can be
 ‘ given by the wisest of us all, that we
 ‘ never shall be guilty of it? It is an
 ‘ involuntary error; the effect of a sud-
 ‘ den object that, when we least think
 ‘ of it, strikes upon the senses, con-
 ‘ founds

'founds the understanding, and leads the inclination astray, before people well know what they are doing.'

'Since it is so,' said Jenny, 'and may as well happen after marriage as before, I think it is best not to marry at all, as the consequences of such an accident would be terrible indeed.'— 'Then you would chuse to avoid a certain good,' cried Sophia, laughing, 'rather than run the risque of falling into an uncertain evil? But I do not regard what you say on this head: we may talk as we will; but when it comes to the point, we shall do just as nature prompts.'

Thus did the odd event of Rodophil's courtship furnish out both serious and pleasant matter of conversation for these two ladies while they continued together: but Jenny, who had not intended her visit should be long, took her leave on the third day, and returned to London; where a second discovery fell in her way, which greatly corroborated those sentiments which the first had begun to inspire her with.

There are few milliners of more reputation in their way among the beau monde than Mrs. Frill. Jenny had been her customer ever since she had left her boarding-school; and happening now to go to her shop for some things she wanted, found her behind the counter very busy, and bustling among her shelves and band-boxes; a thing very extraordinary with her, as she was pretty far advanced in years, was infirm, and had always kept an extremely adroit shop-maid, who was used to take the trouble of the most part of the business off her hands.

'Bless me!' cried Jenny, 'it is a kind of prodigy to see you below stairs, especially at this time in the morning. Pray, where is Mrs. Beckey, that you are obliged to fatigue yourself in this manner?'

'Ah, Miss Jessamy!' replied she, puffing and blowing like a pair of bellows that had lost it's wind, 'Beckey has played the fool with herself; she has left me, and is gone into keeping.'— 'Into keeping!' cried Jenny; 'I should never have suspected it: I thought Mrs. Beckey had been defended by the plainness of her person, as well as by her virtue, from all attacks of that nature. But pray, who is the man?'— 'I was of your

'opinion,' said Mrs. Frill; 'but Sir J—*** has found charms in her, and she in him; he has taken fine lodgings for her, and they are almost always together.'

She had no sooner mentioned the name of Sir J—***, than Jenny burst into exclamations; she knew very well that he had loved, to the most romantic height, the lady who was now his wife; that he had not been married to her more months than it had cost him years of courtship to obtain her; that she was a person whose beauty, accomplishments, virtue, and good-nature, rendered her every way deserving of all the affection he had professed for her; and now to hear he had so early falsified his vows, seemed a thing so strange, so incredible, that she could scarce believe her ears, or that Mrs. Frill was not mistaken in what she said. She asked her over and over if she was sure the thing was true, and desired her to repeat all the particulars she knew concerning this surprizing affair; to which the other complied in these terms.

'You must know, Madam,' said she, 'that I had a very curious French capuchin; never was there a greater beauty of it's kind; it was wrought by a nun of quality, to be disposed of for the benefit of the poor; scarce a flower that grows but was represented in their proper colours, intermixed with gold and silver. I shewed it to such of my customers as I thought most likely to be the purchasers: they all admired it, but did not care to give the price, though nothing was ever so cheap; for I asked no more than fifty guineas; but the truth is, most of them had lost a great deal of their money at play; and you know, Madam, that makes ill for us tradespeople. I had kept it above a week; and, fearing it would be blowed upon, proposed a raffle, and got ten ladies to subscribe five guineas a-piece; but when the day came appointed to decide to whose lot the prize should fall, one of them sent me word she had changed her mind, and could not come.'

'This a little vexed me,' continued she; 'but, rather than lose all, I was determined to make up the deficiency myself, when luckily this very Sir J—*** stepped in. As he was a married man, I ventured to ask him

‘ if he would not try his fortune for a present to his lady. He readily agreed; and, in fine, won it. I offered to send it home; but he told me I need not give myself that trouble, for his man should call for it the next day, which Beckey told me he did; but you will find, by the sequel, that he intended no such thing.

‘ About a week after, as near as I can remember,’ went she on, ‘ this audacious young hussy pretended to go on a visit to a relation, but came not home the whole night, which very much surprized me; and, as she never had been guilty of the like before, made me fear some accident had befallen her; but the next morning I received a letter from her, which I will read to you.

“ TO MRS. FRILL.

“ MADAM,
“ I Beg your pardon for quitting your service in so clandestine a manner; but I had an offer which I did not think proper to refuse: I have a quarter’s wages in your hands; and that, I hope, will make amends for my going without warning. Pray, be so good to send my box by the bearer. I am, Madam, your humble servant to command,

“ REBECCA TRIP.”

‘ I was very much amazed, as you may easily believe,’ resumed she, ‘ at the impertinence of the creature in writing to me in this manner; however, I had presence of mind enough to ask the porter from whence he brought the letter; and he readily told me from one Madam Trip, in South Audley Street; on which I presently guessed her situation, though not the person who had occasioned this change in it.

‘ But I continued not long in suspense,’ pursued she; ‘ one of the ladies who had been so unfortunate to lose her five pieces at the raffle, told me she had met her in the Mall, dressed in a very rich brocade short sacque and petticoat, and that very capuchin Sir J— *** had won; and I soon after heard, by one who is acquainted with the person at whose

‘ house she lodges, that she passes there for a relation of that gentleman’s, and that he visits her every day.’

Mrs. Frill had just finished this little narrative, when a lady came into her shop: after the usual compliment — ‘ I have been just giving,’ said Mrs. Frill to her, ‘ this young lady an account of the change of Beckey’s circumstances; and, I assure your ladyship, have had much ado to make her believe the veracity of it.’ — ‘ I am sensible,’ replied Jenny, ‘ that things of this nature too frequently happen; but I confess, that to find a man, who loved to that degree Sir J— *** has done, should act in such a manner, is very astonishing.’

‘ For my part,’ said the lady, ‘ I see nothing astonishing in it, except his want of taste; for as to his keeping a mistress, it could not be expected to be otherwise; that woman is a fool who thinks to keep a pretty fellow to herself in a town like this: it is true, his wife is a very fine woman; but he has had her, and variety has charms for us all.’

‘ In some things it may, Madam,’ answered Jenny; ‘ yet I cannot help thinking that inconstancy, either in man or woman, argues a very weak mind.’ — ‘ Lord, Miss, you talk like one that knows nothing of the world,’ cried the other; ‘ I have been married these three years, and am wise by experience; it is not in nature for two persons always to be pleasing to each other: but if you will not take my word for it, I hope you will believe Cowley, who was certainly as great a judge of love as even Ovid himself.

“ The world’s a scene of changes, and to be Constant in nature were inconstancy;

“ For ’twere to break the laws herself has made;

“ Our substances themselves do fleet and fade:

“ The most fix’d being still does move and fly,

“ Swift as the wings of Time, ’tis measur’d by.

“ To imagine, then, that love should never cease,

“ (Love is but the ornament of these)

“ Were quite as senseless as to wonder why

“ Beauty and colour stay not when we die.”

Not this authority, nor all the arguments the lady could bring, who possibly

possibly was herself a proof of what she urged, could make Jenny recede from her opinion, or give up the point: the dispute between them continued till other company coming in, put an end to it.

Though, by the whole deportment of Jenny, there seemed to be but little share of earth in her composition, yet had she her serious moments: what she had seen at the house of Rodophil, and been told of at Mrs. Frill's, came often into her mind; and she began to fear, from these two instances, that inconsistency was a frailty to which human nature was but too liable; and the reflections she made upon it had no small influence on her future conduct towards Jemmy; to whom it is now high time we should return.

CHAP. IV.

WILL PROBABLY OCCASION VARIOUS CONJECTURES ON WHAT IS TO COME.

A Very small share of experience and observation may serve to inform us, that there is no passion of the soul which more easily wears off than that of grief for the death of friends; and, indeed, it is highly reasonable that it should be so. Religion obliges us to a perfect resignation to the decrees of Providence; philosophy teaches us that it is weak, and unbecoming the dignity of our species, to bewail woes which, in their very nature, are irredeemable; and the laws of society forbid us to indulge any emotions that might enervate our abilities, and render us less useful to the community.

Whether any arguments, drawn from the above considerations, could claim a part in enabling Jemmy to recover his former vivacity, I will not take upon me to determine; but certain it is, that, in a very short time, nothing of the mourner, except the habit, was to be seen about him.

It would have been somewhat strange, indeed, if a gentleman, not yet quite one-and-twenty, possessed of a very plentiful estate, and master of accomplishments to recommend him to the best company, should have had any leisure for melancholy reflections in a town like London, so abounding with

every thing that can entertain and raise pleasing sensations in a youthful heart.

In the midst of all the various amusements he gave into, his dear Jenny, however, was not forgot; scarce a day passed over without his visiting her once, if not more, in some one part of it: they behaved to each other in the same manner they had always been accustomed to do; quite open and free, without the least breach of innocence or modesty; kind, without any mixture of dissimulation; and obliging, without taking any pains to be so.

Scarce are there any where to be found two persons whose dispositions so exactly tallied: both of them were gay and volatile almost to an excess; both loved the pleasures of the town, yet never pursued them so far as to transgress the bounds of strict virtue in the one, nor honour in the other. Both had an affluence of wit, and a great talent for ridicule; and both had too much good-nature and generosity to extend that propensity to the prejudice of any one: in short, they were what the poet says—

‘In all so much alike, each heart

‘Seem’d but the other’s counter-part.’

To the foregoing character of them might also have been added, that neither of them were possessed of any strong passions; and, though the affection they had for each other was truly tender and sincere, yet neither of them felt those impatiences, those anxieties, those transporting hopes, those distracting fears, those causeless jealousies, or any of those thousand restless sensations, that usually perplex a mind devoted to an amorous flame: they were happy when they met, but not uneasy when they parted. He was not in the least alarmed on finding she was frequently visited by some of the finest gentlemen in town; nor was she at all disconcerted when she was told that he was well-received by ladies of the most distinguished characters.

I am well aware that many of my readers will be apt to say, people who could think and act in the manner I have described, either had no charms for each other, or seemed incapable of loving at all: and I am ready to confess that, according to the received notions of love, there was a seeming inconsistency in this conduct; and it had

more

more the appearance of a cold indifference than the warm glow of mutual inclinations.

Yet that they did love each other is most certain, as will hereafter be demonstrated by proofs much more unquestionable than all those extravagances: those raging flights, commonly looked upon as infallible tokens of the passion; but which, how fierce soever the fires they spring from may burn for a while, we see frequently extinguish of themselves, and leave nothing but the smoke behind.

All the formalities of a first and second mourning for the dead being over, every one now expected they should soon see the completion of a marriage: they knew had been so long intended: Jemmy also had some thoughts of it himself, and began to consider on such things as were proper to be done previous to the solemnity.

On looking over his father's papers, he had found marriage-articles between him and Jenny, with a deed of settlement on her by way of dower, which the old gentleman had caused to be drawn up some time before his death: these writings he now put into his pocket, and carried them to her, in order for her approbation.

'What are these?' cried she, when he presented her with the packet. 'They are what concerns you as nearly as myself,' replied he; 'therefore I would have you examine the contents at some leisure hour, and let me know if you think there is any thing in them that requires alteration or amendment.'

'They ought to be things of great consequence, indeed, by their bulk,' said she smiling, and beginning to unfold the parchment. 'You know,' returned he, with the same gay air, 'for what we are designed by both our fathers; and I suppose mine, as being your guardian also, thought himself the most proper person to decide the terms on which we should come together.'

'I have no reason,' answered she, 'to suspect either his justice or goodwill towards me: however, I will take the first opportunity of seeing what he has done for me on this score.' In speaking this she looked the writing he had brought in an escritoire that was placed just behind

her; then turning hastily to him—'But, my dear Jemmy,' continued she, 'you must know I have promised some company to go to Ranelagh; and, I believe, they are already beginning to expect me.'—'It happens very luckily,' said he; 'for there are three or four young fellows of us who have promised to give some ladies the musick on the River to-night; and I could not have staid above three minutes longer with you; for they depend upon me to see the hands all ready. So, my dear Jenny, I will not detain you. Farewel!'—'Farewel, Jemmy!' rejoined she: and with these words both ran down stairs together; he went into one chair, and she into another, to fulfil their several engagements.

The next day they saw each other again, as usual. After some little chit-chat on ordinary affairs, he asked her if she had found time to look over the writings he had brought the day before. 'Yes,' answered she; 'I breakfasted on them this morning.'—'Well,' cried he, 'what objections have you to make?'—'None at all,' replied she: 'I rather think your father has made a better provision for me than my own would have desired or expected.'—'Then, I suppose, there is nothing left for us to do,' said he, 'but sign and seal, and go together before a parson?'—'Some people may say so,' replied she; 'but, for my part, I am of a quite different opinion; and think there is a great deal for us both to do before we come to the words—"To have and to hold."

'Easily comprehend what you would be at,' resumed he, laughing: 'new cloaths for ourselves and servants, some addition to the equipage; a more fashionable chariot, another pair of horses; perhaps——' 'Hold! hold!' cried she, interrupting him; 'I have no such stuff in my thoughts, I do assure you: what I mean is infinitely more material than all you have mentioned; and that is, the being certain within ourselves of never repenting the engagements we are about to enter into.'

'Repenting!' said he; 'there is no danger of that, I believe: I will promise you to make as good a husband as I can; and I am sure you will make

'make a good wife.'—'That is all as chance directs,' answered she: 'we may think perfectly well at one time, and act very ill at another. In fine, my dear Jemmy,' continued she, 'I think we ought to know a little more of the world, and of ourselves, before we enter into serious matrimony.'

'Why, faith, Jenny,' answered he, 'I cannot help saying but that you are in the right: I should not much like, methinks, to be quite so soon the father of a family.'—'And I should hate to be called Mamma,' rejoined she, 'before I arrived at an age to write myself Woman.'

'I wonder,' pursued she, 'how people can resolve to cut themselves off from all the pleasures of life, just as they are beginning to have a relish for them. How should I regret being confined at home by domestick affairs, while others of my sex and age were flaunting in the Mall, or making one at the rout of a woman of quality? And how it would mortify you to hear the ladies cry disdainfully—'Jemmy Jessamy is a very pretty fellow; but he is married?' and then toss up their heads; and, in contempt of you, turn the *doux yeux* on the next man in company, though, perhaps, he happens to be one of the most insignificant fops the follies of the times ever fashioned, and without any one merit to recommend him, but merely his having no wife?'

Jenny, who had always somewhat amiably striking in her eyes and tone of voice, appeared at this instant so particularly brilliant, that Jemmy could not forbear catching her in his arms with the utmost rapture, crying at the same time—'I shall little regard the contempt of all the women in the world, while blest with the kindness of my dear, dear Jenny.'

'And I think too,' replied she, returning his embrace, and looking on him with a most enchanting softness, 'that I could forego all other joys of life for those of my dear Jemmy's love: yet, after all,' continued she, 'we may both of us be deceived in our own hearts. I have heard the wise say, that nothing is so difficult to acquire as the true knowledge of ourselves; and who can tell what time and accidents may produce?'

Here Jemmy was beginning to make

the most fervent protestations, that it was not in the power of Fate itself to occasion the least alteration in his present sentiments on her account; and Jenny was half persuaded, by what she felt in her own breast, that an affection, grounded and habitual as theirs had been, was incapable of varying on either side; so that if this tender conversation had continued but a very little longer, it is highly probable they had agreed to put the finishing stroke to the work their parents had laboured for, by an immediate marriage.

Of this, however, there can be no positive assurance, as it was broke off by some company coming in; but whether fortunately or unfortunately for the lovers this interruption happened in so critical a moment, the reader, if he has patience to wait, will, in the sequel of this history, be informed.

C H A P. V.

IS SOMEWHAT MORE EXPLICIT
THAN THE FORMER.

THE persons who had surprised our lovers in the midst of the most interesting discourse they ever yet had entertained each other with, were two young ladies of Jenny's intimate acquaintance: they had been driven out of the Park by a shower of rain, and could not go home without calling on her, to communicate something which they thought would be equally diverting to her as it had been to themselves.

On seeing Jemmy with her—'We have caught you alone together,' said one of them; 'and it is happy for you that you have been so, as nothing but the pleasure of each other's company could have atoned for what you have lost by not being in the Mall to-night.'

'As how, pray?' demanded she. 'Lady Fisk,' resumed the other—'Oh, such sneering, such pointing, such an universal titter, as soon as ever she appeared!'—'Lady Fisk!' cried Jemmy, interrupting her: 'I am afraid, Madam, your intelligence is stale; that lady has played over all her tricks long ago; and can do nothing new for us to laugh at.'

'You are quite mistaken, I assure you,' answered she. 'She has now,

‘as Colly says, “outdone all her usual outdoings;” as you will be obliged to confess when you have heard the story.’

‘What!’ cried he; ‘can any thing go beyond her adventure in Covent Garden; where she went in men’s cloaths, picked up a woman of the town, and was severely beaten by her on the discovery of her sex?’

‘Or what happened to her at Bartholomew-Fair,’ said Jenny; ‘where being a little too pert with some young apprentices, who had attacked her as a lady of pleasure, a riot ensued; and she was glad to produce her seal with the coat-of-arms upon it, and a letter she had received that day from her lord, to prevent being lodged that night in the watch-house, and carried before the sitting-alderman next morning?’

‘Neither of these exploits,’ replied the lady that had spoke first, ‘comes up to what we have to tell you, or gave her half the mortification. It would be the first story in the world, if one could find out the beginning; but the misfortune is, that nothing but the catastrophe as yet is come to light.’

‘It is but half a story, then, at best,’ said Jemmy, laughing; ‘but let us hear it, however.’—‘I should not have kept you so long in suspense, my dear, if this thing here,’ cried she, giving Jemmy a slap on the shoulder with her fan, ‘had not interrupted me. You must know that, some night last week, Lord and Lady Fisk had a most terrible quarrel: they were just going into bed; she was undressed all but her under-petticoat; what she said or did to provoke him to such wrath, Heaven knows; but he pushed her out of the chamber, drove her down stairs, and in that condition turned her into the street, charging the porter not to open the door on any account.’

‘Never was the pride and spirit of any lady so humbled as her’s,’ continued this talkative lady: ‘after finding that knocking and calling loud was to no effect, she condescended to put her mouth close to the key-hole of the door, and beseech the porter, in the most submissive terms, to let her in, though it were no farther than the hall; while her remorseless lord

looked through the window, and insulted her distress, told her it was a fine night, and that it was good for her ladyship’s health, to be thus *à fresco*.’

‘After having had his fill of laughter at the miserable plight to which she was reduced, he consented to her admittance: she was no sooner within the doors than she flew up stairs; the dispute between them was renewed with almost the same vehemence as before; he loaded her with a thousand foul names; she, in return, called him Toad, Devil, and every thing her passion could suggest; till, having both railed themselves out of breath, they agreed to go into bed together, in order to finish the quarrel.’

‘But now comes the jest,’ went she on. ‘How long a time do you think it took up to compose this difference?’ ‘Why, no less than three whole days and nights successively; during all which space the chamber-door was never opened but to take in some refreshment, which was placed for them in the next room. This evening was the first of their appearance since their resurrection from the sepulchre of down; my lord received such congratulations upon it as made him glad to quit the Park; but her ladyship, having somewhat more assurance, staid till the change of weather obliged her, as well as ourselves, to take shelter in our chairs.’

‘I cannot help confessing,’ said Jemmy, ‘but that there is somewhat pretty extraordinary in this affair; and also that one of them has a greater share of complaisance than I suspected; since it is plain that whichever of them was in fault, the other did equal penance.’

A good deal of pleasantry passed on this adventure, during the whole time the ladies staid, which was not very long; they had here opened their packet, and were upon the wing to carry it to those other of their acquaintance to whom they thought it might be equally new and agreeable.

The ladies had no sooner taken their leave, than Jenny began to animadvert, with more strength of reason than could have been expected from a person of her years, on the ridiculous fact they had been relating. ‘You hear, Jemmy,’ said she, ‘what unaccountable things

things married people are sometimes guilty of: instead of living together in mutual harmony, it seems, methinks, as if they took a kind of pleasure in making each other wretched; and sure they must do so, or they would not thus expose themselves to the contempt of the world, and become the jest even of their own servants, who must necessarily be the first witnesses of their folly.

'We ought not, however,' replied he, 'to lay on marriage the blame of all those preposterous things we see acted in that state by persons we have been speaking of; because, long before their entrance into it, both of them behaved in such a manner as to shew they were wholly governed by caprice, and not by that farcical passion which many people are possessed of in a more or less degree, for making a great noise, and being talked of in the world, though it is only for foibles, which one would think they should rather labour to conceal:

'But I must own,' continued he, 'that I have sometimes been very much surprized at the little concord I have observed between persons whose principles, humours, and behaviour, in general, would make one imagine them equally qualified to give each other perfect happiness.'

'What you say is extremely just,' cried Jenny; 'and I have often had occasion to make the same reflections; it follows, then, that every one, before they engage in marriage, should be well versed in all those things, whatever they are, which constitute the happiness of it: this town is an ample school, and both of us have acquaintance enough in it to learn, from the mistakes of others, how to regulate our own conduct and passions, so as not to be laughed at ourselves for what we laugh at in them.'

'Spoke like a philosopher,' rejoined Jemmy: 'and, upon second thoughts, I agree with you, that as every thing is ready for us, and we can marry when we will, it will be best for us both to stay till we have got some farther lights into the mysterious duties of the conjugal union.'

Jenny, who as yet had not the least inclination to enter into the serious road of matrimony, and would have been equally loth to have appeared too refrac-

tory, if he had insisted on the performance of the covenant made between their fathers, was quite transported to find his sentiments so conformable to her own on this head; but forbore testifying all the satisfaction she felt, for fear of making him call in question the sincerity of her affection for him.

She only told him, that she was certain it would be for their mutual interest to do as he had mentioned; on which he pursued his discourse in these terms.

'But, my dear Jenny,' said he, 'as learning will not come of itself, and we should be equally perfect in the different parts we are to act together hereafter; suppose we should resolve to communicate to each other all the discoveries we are able to make, among the several families that either of us converse with, and also all the confidences which are reposed in us: by this means I shall be acquainted with all the humours of your sex, and you no stranger to those of mine; so that neither of us will be at a loss to bear with the foibles which nature or custom may have implanted in the other. Besides,' added he, 'this is no more than practising before-hand one of those points which, as I take it, is very essential to the happiness of both a husband and a wife.'

'I am charmed with your project,' answered she; 'but then each of us must be sure to preserve an inviolable secrecy in what has been imparted by the other, which is another main essential towards conjugal felicity.'

Jemmy having assured her, that whatever he said to him on this account should be no more than talking to her own heart, they were beginning to divert themselves with the idea of the many whimsical passages they should have to recite to each other, when a footman brought a letter to Jenny, the contents whereof were as follow.

' TO MISS JESSAMY.

'DEAR CREATURE,
'IF this finds you at home and disengaged, I flatter myself you will immediately comply with the request it contains. I am now alone, and in a situation which requires both consolation and advice, neither of which I can hope for more effectually
C than

' than from the friendship with which you favour me. I would have waited on you, but am prevented by reasons which you will be no stranger to on seeing me. I am, with the most perfect amity, my dear Miss Jessamy, yours, &c.

' E. MARLOVE.

P. S. If I am unhappily deprived of your company to-night, I beg you will not fail coming as early as possible in the morning; for I am all impatience to let you into the history of my misfortunes.'

' See here,' said she, giving the letter to Jemmy; 'fortune already is likely to present me with something that may be worth your knowledge: the lady who writes in this manner has honour and virtue; she has been but four months married to a gentleman whom she preferred to a great number of other admirers, and who seems passionately fond of her. You will not wonder that I am in as much haste to hear the occasion of her complaint, as she is to tell it me.'

She then ordered a chair to the door; and, calling for her gloves and capuchin, hurried them on while he was reading: the motive which carried her away was too agreeable for him to offer to detain her; and they parted without farther ceremony than a kiss, and 'Good-night.'

CHAP. VI.

CONTAINS SOME THINGS WELL WORTHY OF BEING SERIOUSLY ATTENDED TO, BY THOSE ESPECIALLY FOR WHOSE SERVICE THEY ARE CHIEFLY INSERTED.

THOUGH Jenny had not doubted, by the lady's letter, but that something very extraordinary and perplexing had happened to her, yet she was far from expecting to find her in the condition she now did.

That half-distracted fair-one was lying extended on a couch; her hair loose and hanging in wild disorder over her face; her lovely eyes pouring forth tears; all her features distorted with

excess of passion; and every symptom of despair, grief, and rage, about her.

Jenny was quite frightened; and, indeed, who that beheld her in this manner, but must have thought the most terrible accident imaginable had befallen her! 'Ah, my dear Miss Jessamy!' said she, as soon as she saw her enter, 'how charitable is this visit to the most undone, forlorn, and miserable woman, upon earth!'

'Bless me!' cried Jenny, seating herself near her, 'what can have occasioned this sudden change in your late happy condition?'—'Oh! I will tell you all,' replied the other: 'but when you shall hear how I have been treated by my ungrateful, my perfidious husband, you will forswear marriage, and curse the whole race of false, dissembling man!'

'I sent for you,' continued she, 'to make you the confidante of my resentment, as you have always been of my love; for this unworthy man, who, from my slave, is now become my tyrant, instead of studying how to please me, has the insolence to attempt making me subservient to his will, and to contradict me even in things where every woman has a right to rule. Could you ever have believed it, my dear Miss Jessamy?' went she on: 'the vain creature imagines I have love enough for him to be satisfied with whatever he does.'

'I thought, indeed,' said Jenny, 'that both of you had love enough to be satisfied with what the other did. But, pray, what may be the subject of the present dispute between you?'—'Oh! such a gross affront upon my understanding, my humour, my every thing that is dear to woman-kind,' replied Mrs. Marlove. 'But of what nature?' again demanded her impatient friend.

It was in vain she repeated the question over for several times successively; Mrs. Marlove was too much overcome by her passion to be able to give any direct account of the occasion; and all that could be gathered from her incoherent exclamations was, that a favourite servant of Mr. Marlove had quarrelled with her waiting-maid; that she had insisted on the man's being turned away; and he, as strenuously, that she should part with her maid; that

very



very high words had rose on this occasion; that he had endeavoured to exert the authority of a husband, and she to maintain the respect and complaisance due to a wife; and that, after having absolutely refused to do as she desired, he had flung out of the house in very great discontent.

She was but just beginning to enter somewhat farther into the merits of the cause, when a servant put his head between the door, and told Mrs. Marlove that the cloth was laid for supper, and that his master was come home. 'Well, and what of that?' cried she hastily. 'Nothing, Madam,' said the man; 'only my master desires that your ladyship and the young lady will be pleased to walk down.'—'Tell him,' replied she, with the utmost disdain in her voice and countenance, 'that I am not pleased to do any thing that he desires; and that I will neither eat nor sleep with him while he keeps that fellow Jonathan in the house.'

On this he said no more, but withdrew; and Mr. Marlove came up in a moment after: his looks expressed the utmost discontent; he saluted Jenny, however, with respect; and then, turning to his wife—'I am surprized, my dear,' cried he, 'that you should expose yourself in this manner: family disputes ought to be discussed in private; it is impertinent to trouble our friends with them, and ridiculous to make our servants the witnesses of them. For Heaven's sake, therefore, consider a little——'

'I shall consider nothing,' said she, interrupting him, 'but your unkindness and ingratitude. What!' pursued she, with vehemence, 'to refuse me in so poor a trifle as the dismissal of a servant!'

'Trifles, Madam,' answered he very gravely, 'when insisted on too peremptorily, become things of consequence: besides, you have often heard me say this man lived with my father; that when I went abroad, he gave him to me as the choicest present he could make; that he attended me in my travels through the greatest part of Europe; and that I have experienced his love and fidelity to me in a thousand instances; it would therefore be highly unjust and ungenerous in me to turn him off; and I can look upon it as no less unreasonable in you to

request it merely on the idle complaints and tittle-tattle of a chambermaid.'

'That chambermaid,' said she, in the most haughty tone, 'while she belongs to me, is at least upon a level with your valet; though, in spite to me, I suppose you have now raised him to your house-steward.'

Mr. Marlove grew very red at these words, and was about to have made some reply, which perhaps might have heightened the quarrel, when the person who had been the occasion of it entered the room.

He was a grave, well-looking man, and had a certain open honesty in his countenance, which answered to the character given of him by his master.

'Sir,' said he to Mr. Marlove, bowing in the most respectful manner, 'I have never known in my whole life so real a grief as I now feel, finding myself the unhappy cause of any disagreement between your honour and my lady; I therefore most humbly beseech you will be pleased to permit me to quit the house directly; for it is not fit your honour's peace of mind should suffer any disturbance, or my lady the least uneasiness, even for a moment, on so worthless a subject as myself.'

'How, Jonathan!' demanded Mr. Marlove; 'are you in such haste to leave my service, that you would go before I am provided with a proper person to supply your place?'—'Oh! there is no reason for detaining him on that account,' cried Mrs. Marlove; 'my Abigail has a brother just now come out of place; by the character I have heard of him he will be extremely fit for you; and we can have him at a minute's warning.'

'It is very likely,' replied he; then, having paused a little on what his wife had said—'Well, Jonathan,' pursued he, 'we will talk farther on this matter to-morrow; but leave the room, and bid somebody send Abigail hither.' Mrs. Marlove exulted within herself on hearing him speak in this manner; and, pulling Jenny by the sleeve, 'My dear,' cried she to her in a low voice, 'I shall conquer this domineering husband at last.'

Abigail immediately obeying the summons that had been sent for her—'Well, Abigail,' said Mr. Marlove,

with half a smile, which she took for an indication of his being in great good-humour with her; but, as it afterwards proved, was no more than a sarcastic sneer; 'I am told you have a brother perfectly qualified for my service?'

'Yes, please your honour,' answered she, simpering; 'and, though I say it, as clever a fellow as ever stepped in shoe-leather; he can comb a wig to charm, and buckle too, upon occasion; he does every thing in taste, I assure your honour: besides, he is a spruce young man, and a thousand times fitter to attend your honour than the old formal creature you have now.'

'It may be so,' said Mr. Marlove; 'but I have no business for him; nor have you any in my house longer than this night; therefore pack up your trumpery, and be gone to-morrow morning.' She was opening her mouth to speak; but he prevented her by saying, in a stern and resolute voice—'No repartees, minx! I will have no incendiaries in my family! Out of my sight this moment, and come into it no more!'

Though scarce any creature was ever endowed with a greater share of confidence than this wench, yet was she now so terrified at the looks of her master, that she durst not utter a single syllable while in his presence; and contented herself with muttering, all the way she went down stairs, what she had not courage to say loud enough to be heard.

But it is altogether impossible to describe the rage Mrs. Marlove was in at this last proof of her husband's resolution; which was the more insupportable to her, as she had, not above a moment or two before, flattered herself with a belief that he was inclinable to conform to her desires.

She would have spoke; but excess of passion choked the passage of her words: she flew into her chamber, and threw herself upon the bed; where she certainly would have fallen into a fit, if Jenny, who had immediately followed her, had not cut the lacings of her stays in order to give her air.

On this she began to revive a little; and Abigail that instant coming up, gave her a glass of cold water, which perfected the cure. The first use she made of her recovered breath was to inveigh against the injustice, as she termed

it, of her husband. Jenny was endeavouring to persuade her to more moderation, but was interrupted in the midst of what she was saying by Abigail.

'Nay, Madam,' cried that malapert hussey, 'for that matter, my lady has as much reason to be vexed as I! For my part, I do not know what my master means by using me as he has done; he gives himself strange airs, methinks! I am sure it is not like a gentleman to shew so little respect for a servant!'

These saucy reflections brought Mrs. Marlove more to herself than all the assistance that had been given her: angry, as she was with her husband, she could not bear to hear him mentioned, by such a creature, in the manner she now did. 'Airs!' cried she. 'Respect! Was ever any thing so ridiculously impudent!—Sure, wench, thou hast forgot that the gentleman thou speakest so contemptuously of is my husband!'

'No, Madam!' answered she, bridling up her head; 'I forgot nothing, that I ought to remember: and I must say again, that it does not become him to treat either you or me so unhand-some as he has done.'—'What, does the odious thing pretend to make comparisons!' cried Mrs. Marlove; and, provoked beyond all patience at the insolence of her deportment, snatched a powder-box from off the dressing-table, and threw it at her head; saying, at the same time—'Be gone this instant! I shall keep no such bold-face about me!'

'Bold-face, Madam!' returned the audacious creature. 'Very pretty, truly! But do not think I shall beg to stay: there are other places to be had; and I do not value—' She would have ran farther on in the same strain, if the sudden appearance of her master had not stopped her mouth, and made her think proper to go out of the room.

Mr. Marlove, being heartily ashamed that Jenny had been witness of this foolish affair, resolved to salve it up, if possible, before she went away; and, to that end, came into his wife's chamber; chusing rather to recede a little from what he thought his just prerogative as a husband, than suffer her to depart with the notion of his having asserted it too far.

As he came into the room at one door, Abigail was going out at the other: he easily perceived, by her countenance, that some *brûlée* had happened between her and her lady; which taking for a good omen of succeeding in his design, he approached Mrs. Marlove; and, with an air perfectly *degagée* and unembarrassed—‘I hope, my dear,’ said he, ‘you are by this time convinced that your maid had a farther view in quarrelling with Jonathan than she pretended; and, also, how little she deserves you should espouse her cause?’

‘She has been impertinent, indeed,’ answered she; ‘but it is no wonder that she is so! When a woman is ill-treated by her husband, she can expect no other than to be so by her servant also; and it is to you, to you alone, that I either have been, or shall hereafter be, deprived of the respect due to me from our domesticks.’

‘Accuse me not,’ said he, ‘of any thing so contrary to my nature: your merits, and my just sense of them, will always engage me to behave towards you, both in publick and in private, with all the complaisance and tenderness that man can pay, or woman can expect.’

‘Then you would not contradict me in trifles?’ cried she, a little softened. ‘I will contradict you in nothing,’ said he, ‘that my reason will permit me to grant, or your own, on mature deliberation, induce you to desire. As to the present dispute between us,’ continued he, ‘I only beg you will defer any farther speech of it till to-morrow; and if, in that time, you do not find cause to alter your opinion, I shall endeavour to accede to yours.’

‘A very fair proposal indeed, Sir!’ said Jenny, smiling: ‘and, my dear Mrs. Marlove, if you do not accept it, I shall lay the whole blame of all the disagreements that may hereafter happen between you entirely on your ill-nature.’

‘That is a very severe inference,’ replied she: ‘however, to oblige you, I shall comply with Mr. Marlove’s request.’—‘I am glad to obtain it at any rate,’ cried he; ‘and I hope we may now go down to supper, which has waited for us this half-hour.’

Mrs. Marlove said she did not care for eating, and desired they would excuse her absence; but, by the entreaties of her husband, and some little pleasantries Jenny made use of on this occasion, she was at last prevailed upon; and they all went down together into the parlour.

Jenny kept an observant eye over both the husband and the wife all the time they were at table; and, as she was happy in a penetration which few of her sex, especially at her years, can boast of, easily perceived that, though he behaved with a politeness beyond what could have been expected after what had passed, and she seemed to have abated a great part of her late haughtiness and resentment, yet neither of them were sincerely inclined to submit to the will of the other in any thing which was not entirely agreeable to their own.

The apologies they made to her, however, on the account of the unpleasing entertainment she had met with in this visit, with her obliging answers to them in return, and repeated good wishes for their future peace, engrossed a great part of their conversation during the whole time she staid.

But the night being pretty far advanced, when supper was ended she took her leave of the half-reconciled pair, and went home full of those reflections which, on the scene she had been witness of, must naturally have occurred even to a person of a much less considerative disposition.

CHAP. VII.

AFFORDS FRESH MATTER FOR EDUCATION TO THOSE WHO STAND IN NEED OF IT, AS WELL AS ENTERTAINMENT TO SUCH WHO DO NOT.

JENNY had an infinity of good-nature, and was extremely troubled at the disagreement she had seen between two persons whom she thought had been entirely happy in being united to each other: the more she ruminated on the behaviour of Mrs. Marlove, the more she found in it to condemn; but then she was also equally surprized to find so great a change in that of her husband. She had frequently been in their

their company while in their days of courtship; she had seen him humour all the little whims and caprices which the vanity of flattered beauty had made her guilty of; she had heard him praise even her very foibles, and seem charmed with what the rest of the world most blamed her for.

‘Good God!’ cried she to herself, ‘how strange a reverse does marriage bring! Who that sees a man a husband would ever think he had been a lover? Till she was a wife, he would not have presumed to argue with her on any point she took upon her to assert; he would not then have opposed his reason to any folly she committed. It is true, she has insisted on a thing which he must have been both ungenerous and weak to have complied with; yet would he once not have dared to have contradicted her in much greater matters. If she is proud, imperious, and vain, it is on his own too great obsequiousness he ought to lay the blame. Oh! why will men endeavour to persuade us we are goddesses, only to create themselves the pains of convincing us afterwards that we are but mortals!’

‘Yet, after all,’ said she again, ‘we know that the extravagant encomiums so lavishly bestowed upon us before marriage, are mere words of course; the homage, the submissions, paid us by the lover, all form and empty shew: and, as they are put in practice only to soothe our vanity, ought not to deceive our understandings so far as to make us imagine we either deserve, or have a right to expect, the continuance of them, when the motive that induced them is no more. Marriage, as it removes all coyness and reserve in the woman, so it destroys all suspense in the man: he is then in possession of his wishes, has done with hopes and fears; and solicitations, of course, must also cease.’

‘Stripped, therefore, of that imaginary authority with which we once flattered ourselves, it is certainly the business of our sex to endeavour, by the most soft and obliging behaviour, to preserve and improve, if possible, the love of him whom it is no longer in our power to awe by a contrary way of acting.’

‘A too great tenaciousness of our own merits,’ pursued she, ‘the pride

of doing whatever we have a mind to, and of imposing the laws of our own will on that of the lover, may be submitted to while we are mistresses, but will never be borne with when we are wives. The men, conscious of that superiority which custom and the matrimonial covenant have given them, never fail to exert it; and opposition on our side is struggling against the stream, and but serves to shew our weakness the more in the vain attempt.’

‘In my opinion,’ went she still on, ‘the way to accomplish what we aim at, is not to urge it with too much vehemence in the most reasonable things; much less can we expect success when we insist on such as are in themselves unjustifiable; as in the case of Mrs. Marlove: and I much fear that, if many contests of this nature happen, they will, by degrees, weaken her husband’s affection for her; perhaps, in time, utterly destroy it, and render her both unhappy and unpitied.’

In this manner did the sagacious Jenny reason within herself upon the cause in question; and, upon the whole, her judgment entirely acquitted Mr. Marlove of all blame, and gave the verdict against his too-assuming wife, for whose late behaviour she could find no excuse except her extreme youth, and inexperience of the temper of mankind; that lady being but sixteen, which was two years short of the age she had attained herself.

This naturally led her into reflections on the folly of two persons uniting themselves together by the solemn ties of marriage, without having well considered the duties of the state they were about to enter into; and confirmed her in the resolution she before had taken of living single, till she was as well assured as human reason could make her, that both herself, and the man who was to be her husband, were equally qualified to render each other truly happy.

She longed, however, to see Jemmy, that she might relate this story to him, and hear his sentiments upon it; but she saw him not all the next day; which a little surprized her, as four-and-twenty hours seldom passed over without his making her one visit, if no more. The accident which now occasioned

fined his absence so much longer than usual, was, indeed, of a pretty particular nature. It was this.

On his coming home the night before, he found a letter that had been left for him, requesting his company at an entertainment to be given the next day, on a very extraordinary occasion, by a gentleman who had been an intimate acquaintance of his father. The invitation was too pressing for him to refuse complying with it; which otherwise he would gladly have done, as he expected not to find any guests there suitable to his age or humour.

He found himself, however, agreeably deceived in the conjecture; and was surprized, on his entrance into a spacious room, to see it filled with a very brilliant company of both sexes; who, being assembled in order to celebrate the most joyous circumstances that can happen in private life, came with a sincere resolution of contributing every thing in the power of each to do honour to the feast prepared for them.

But, not to keep the reader in suspense, the person who made this invitation was a gentleman of birth and fortune: he was married, in his youth, to a lady of celebrated beauty, and every way his equal; but, through a too great love of pleasure on his side, and errors in conduct, though without any breach of virtue, on hers, they had been separated for fourteen years, without the least probability of being reconciled; and, even less, of their ever living together again; as all the interposition of their friends for that purpose, during so long a space of time, had been in vain, and was at last entirely given over. The unhopèd-for event, notwithstanding, came to pass; both parties were alike touched with a just sensibility of their former mistakes, and returned to the embraces of each other with more ardency of affection than that with which they had first met in marriage.

There is certainly nothing which so much demonstrates the sincerity of our reformation as a free confession that we have been in the wrong. ‘I was,’ said the gentleman, ‘in possession of a treasure before I had attained to an age capable of knowing the true value of it: I wore it, as an idiot does a diamond, careless on my arm, and liable to be snatched from me by the first

person who admired it’s lustre; but Heaven has preserved it as a blessing for my riper judgment!’

He concluded these words with kissing his lady’s hand; and then went on—‘I was,’ continued he, ‘one of those thoughtless wretches which the poet, doubtless, had in his eye when he wrote these lines—

“Fictitious joys allur’d my dazzled senses,
“And led them in the mystick maze awhile;
“Beguill’d with empty air, my restless heart
“Still after some untasted pleasure roam’d;
“But now the wand’rer sees his peaceful
“home,
“And there finds all it vainly sought abroad.”

‘I cannot suffer you, my dear,’ said the lady, with a most becoming smile, ‘to take upon yourself the whole blame of that unhappy disagreement which has so long divided us; I also have had my share of guilt, though in a different way from yours: if you have been too gay, I have been too inconsiderate; I have endeavoured not to make home delightful to you; I rather, by a thousand impertinencies and follies, rendered my presence tiresome. I had no idea of the duties of my place, but behaved, when set at the head of a family, as I had done in the nursery, and expected to be humoured in the same manner.’

Thus did this lately re-united pair equally condemn themselves for the miscarriage of their past conduct; but, while they were speaking, there were not a few in company, of both sexes, who hung down their heads, as conscious of not being wholly free from the errors they heard mentioned.

Jemmy, according to the agreement made between him and Jenny, kept an observant eye on all those who he found were married; and easily perceived, by the looks which one of them, in particular, frequently gave his wife, that they were far from living together in a perfect harmony; though, as he had never seen either of them before, and was wholly unacquainted with their circumstances, conditions, or humours, it was utterly impossible for him to guess from what latent cause the discord he discovered proceeded: but, as it was the husband who seemed most dissatisfied, he concluded, without knowing any thing of the matter, that it must be the wife who was to blame.

The men are apt to be too partial to one another on this score. In the little time that Jemmy had at present for reflection, these lines of Mr. Dryden came directly into his head—

- Few know what cares a husband's peace de-
- stroy,
- His real griefs, and his dissembled joy.'

It is altogether impracticable for married people, when so unhappy as to have any real or imagined cause of complaint against each other, to keep the uneasiness they labour under from being visible to the world: however perfect, as to other things, they may be in the art of dissimulation, in this, spite of their utmost endeavours, the sentiments of their hearts will break out; every look, every gesture, betrays the inward pangs they feel; which shews that, of all circumstances of discontent, those of marriage are with the most difficulty sustained.

Jenny was afterwards informed, that the last-mentioned gentleman was one of the many whom it is not in the power of fortune to make happy; that he took a kind of gloomy pleasure in creating to himself ideal ills, and then started at the apparition, which nothing but his own productive fancy had conjured up.

His wife was far from being a beauty; and, as to her person, she had received no more from nature than would just serve to make her pass for not disagreeable: as to her behaviour, it was affable and cheerful, but withal extremely modest; for, as she never affected a too great reserve, so she was equally free from all that had the appearance of levity; but neither the little power her eyes had of captivating, nor the prudence of her carriage, could hinder him from imagining every man that looked upon her had a dishonourable design towards her, and also that she had no disinclination to encourage it.

The whole of the entertainment concluded with a kind of ball; and, as there were more gentlemen than ladies present, the cloudy husband, with two others, retired to one corner of the room, and sat drinking to the healths of those that danced.

It was by mere accident, and without the least design on either side, that Jemmy had for his partner, the wife of this suspicious gentleman: but it was

pleasant enough for those who sat near him to observe with what eagerness his eyes pursued each motion in them, which the regulation of the dance required. How his colour changed! how his lips trembled whenever that couple set to each other, or turned hands! It was in vain they filled his glass, and reminded him of the neglected toast, though it was even that of the Royal Family: he thought of nothing but his wife; and seeing her, as he imagined, encouraging the dumb courtship of a person who would invade his rights, he had no longer patience; and the second dance was but just led up when he rose from his seat, and said he must go home, for he had letters of importance to write, which till that moment he had forgot.

This put all in disorder. The gentleman who had made the invitation would fain have persuaded him to stay; but was silenced by the other urging the necessity of his departure: the lady then told him, with a great deal of politeness, that if they must be so unhappy to be deprived of his company, she hoped they should not also lose Mrs. —, who, she supposed, had no letters to write.

'No, no, Madam!' replied he, with very great emotion; 'my wife may stay, if she thinks proper; I do not want her, not I!' She was advancing to take her leave while he was speaking; nor would suffer herself to be prevailed upon, by all the lady could say, to stay behind her husband: but it was easy for any one to see her inclinations took the contrary part, and denied herself the satisfactions such good company afforded, merely through the apprehensions of paying too dearly for it when she came home.

Thus industriously do some people labour to bring on what most they would avoid. If this lady had been possessed of a little more beauty, or, to speak more justly, had she been mistress of a less share of discretion, there were, doubtless, some in company who would have been excited, by the jealousy of her husband, to have attempted that chastity he took such ridiculous measures to preserve.

As it was, however, the behaviour of the husband served to render him contemptible in the eyes of every one; and that of the wife to give her charms, which

which otherwise could not have been remarked in her.

The sarcasms passed on this unhappy, self-tormented gentleman, would be too tedious to repeat; yet were much shorter than they otherwise would have been, if the musick's sprightly sounds had not reminded the company that their feet at that time demanded more employment than their tongues.

It is not to be doubted but that, on going home, every one made their several remarks on what they had seen; but the mind of Jemmy was affected by it in a particular manner, as he considered all that had presented itself to him that day, concurred to make up one great instructive lesson for himself.

CHAP. VIII.

WILL OCCASION VARIOUS SPECULATIONS IN THE INQUISITIVE READER.

WHEN our pair of lovers came to relate mutually to each other the foregoing narratives, they were both of opinion, that most of the disagreements that happened in marriage were occasioned chiefly by the parties entering into that state too early and too precipitately.

'If your friends, who now so much rejoice in being reunited,' said Jenny, 'had taken care, before marriage, to attain those qualifications necessary for the performance of the duties required from their respective stations, they would probably never have fallen into those errors which occasioned their separation.'

'Nor would their guest,' continued she, 'be so unreasonably jealous of his wife's conduct, if, previously to his becoming a husband, he had made himself well acquainted with her principles and disposition, and also equally so with his own humour.'

'Nor would Mrs. Marlove,' replied Jemmy, 'if she had at all studied the temper of mankind, been so vain as to expect the same submission from her husband as she received from him while her lover; much less have pretended to contradict him in things where it was not her province to interfere.'

'Right,' resumed she, smiling; 'and

'you may now easily perceive the advantage it is to us not to hurry ourselves into wedlock, as too many people do, without reflecting what they are about, or being any way prepared to make the noose sit easy.'

'Then you persist in your resolution,' rejoined Jemmy, 'of not being married yet-a-while?' To which the answering in the affirmative, and repeating the arguments she had before made use of in her vindication, he readily enough yielded to the justice of her reason; but that he did so was not so much owing to his discretion as to another motive, which, though Jenny was ignorant of, it is not convenient that the reader should be so.

He had, in reality, met with some adventures of late, which had given him too high a relish for the modish pleasures of the town for him to be able to quit them without reluctance, and which, he had too much good sense not to know, it would ill become him to indulge the pursuit of after he should be a married man.

Among the many places of diversion this great and luxurious town abounds with, Lady Racket's assembly has been always looked upon as the most general rendezvous for all the young and gay of both sexes.

Jemmy went frequently thither: and it happening that one evening the company playing very high, he was stripped of all the money and bank-notes he had about him, which amounted to a considerable sum.

A little vexed at his ill-fortune, he was retiring to a window in order to compose himself, when the sound of a female voice, very loud, made him turn his head: he found it proceeded from Liberia, the celebrated Liberia, who, having been playing at another table, had lost all her money, and had not temper to bear it.

'Was ever such cursed luck!' cried she, starting from her seat; 'I have not a single stake left. I have a good mind to make a solemn vow never to touch a card again!'—'Patience, patience, Madam!' said Jemmy, advancing towards her; 'behold in me your brother in affliction: these things will happen, if we depend on the blind goddess.'—'Have you lost all your money too?' demanded she. 'Every doit, upon my soul!' replied he: 'so

'neither of us have any thing to do at present but to observe the fate of others.'

'That would be an insipid way of killing time, indeed,' said she: 'suppose you and I should sit down to piquet, as we are both in the same condition, and can play with nobody else?'—'With all my heart,' answered he; 'and stake honour against honour.'—'Perhaps that would be just nothing at all,' cried she, laughing. 'I dare trust yours,' rejoined he, 'if you will put the same confidence in mine.'

'It would be ungenerous in me,' replied she, 'not to return good opinion with good opinion: but I think it is against the rules of gaming to play merely upon credit; I will let my solitaire against that ring you have upon your finger.'

Jemmy had a great regard for this ring, not so much for the intrinsic value of it, though it was a fine diamond, as because it had been his father's, who had given it to him some little time before he died: a moment's recollection, however, served to make him know what he should do on this occasion; and he replied, with great alertness—'Madam, I heartily agree to your proposal; with this proviso, that, whichever of us is the winner, the stakes may be redeemable; nor would it be fair in me to play with you on any other terms, as your solitaire is worth much more than my ring.'

'Well, it shall be just as you would have it,' replied she: 'twenty guineas shall be the event.' To which Jemmy agreeing, they sat down to a table which some company had just quit- ted: she plucked off her solitaire, and he his ring; both the pledges were laid under the candlestick, and to play they went. Fortune, for several deals, seemed dubious in whose favour she should decide; but, at length, after a hard-fought battle, gave the victory to Jemmy.

'Was ever any thing so unlucky?' said she; 'but I will not give out. Come, Sir,' continued she, shuffling the cards, 'twenty guineas more; or, if you please, thirty: I shall then either be indebted fifty pieces to you, or have a claim on you for ten.'

Jemmy would fain have persuaded her to give over; but she would hear

nothing he said on that score. They cut the cards; poor Liberia had the advantage of the deal, but was nothing a gainer by it; she had not even the satisfaction of a second struggle; he immediately produced point, queen, and quatorze, without the trouble of playing a card.

'Confusion!' cried she, bursting into tears; 'sure all the stars in the firmament have conspired against me!' With these words she rose from the table. 'You have won, Sir,' pursued she: 'I know your direction, and will send the money in a day or two.' She staid not to hear what answer he would make, but flew out of the room with an air which denoted the utmost agitation of mind.

Liberia had a great share of beauty, and Jemmy of good-nature; the mistress she appeared in rendered her more lovely in his eyes than ever he had thought her; his heart was that instant filled with emotions she had never before inspired it with; he followed, with the solitaire in his hand, and overtook her as she was passing through a room in order to reach the stair-case.

'Madam,' said he to her, 'I cannot suffer that beautiful neck should be without so becoming an ornament, even for the smallest space of time; I beseech you therefore to resume this jewel, and also to assure yourself, that I dare take your word of honour as a sufficient security for a much greater sum than the trifle to which fortune has just now entitled me.'

'No, Mr. Jessamy,' answered she; 'that must not be: my lord is at present out of town; or, if he were at home, I should not chuse to acquaint him with my losses at play; it is also improper for me to let the steward know any thing of the matter. It may be longer than I could wish, or you perhaps expect, before I can, with any convenience, discharge my obligation; so desire you will say no more, but keep the pledge till in my power to redeem it.'

All this was delivered in a voice so broken and hesitating, that Jemmy easily perceived by that, as well as by her looks, that it was with the utmost reluctance she refused the offer he had made, though her pride would not suffer her to accept of it.

Something, which the reader will presently

ently discover, coming that moment into his head—' Since you insist, Madam,' said he, looking tenderly on her, ' and will needs force me to retain something of yours in my hands, consent, at least, that I exchange this mortgage for some other. If you will permit me to wait on you home, and look over your trinkets, I shall certainly find somewhat that will please me as well, and you can much better spare.'

' I must not reject every thing you propose,' replied she, with a half smile; and then received the solitaire from him, which he assisted her in replacing; and while he was doing so, gave her neck a gentle pressure, which she was not so insensible as not to know the meaning of.

There needed no more; she gave him her hand to lead her down stairs; her own chair waiting in the hall, she went into it, and he followed in a hackney.

On coming to her house, she conducted him directly to her dressing-room, where her woman being sitting at work, she bade her set a bottle of wine on the table, and retire till called for; saying she had some accounts to settle with that gentleman.

This attendant was no sooner withdrawn, than the reduced Liberia opened a little cabinet, which contained her jewels: ' Here, Sir,' cried she, ' are all the toys of this nature I am mistress of.' Jemmy scarce vouchsafing a glance towards them, replied—' They must be fine indeed, since owned by you; and must dazzle the sight of a man less knowing than I pretend to be in what is truly valuable: but what is all the lustre they can boast while you are in presence? How faint are the rays of the diamond to those your eyes send forth! How insipid, how weak, is the glow of the ruby to these lips!'

He began this speech with looking intently on her face; and finding nothing there to discourage his attempt, concluded with throwing his arms about her waist, and giving her more lively indications of his sense of the perfections he had praised, than all in the power of language could have done.

They were alone; a couch was in the room; she resisted not his encroachments; and one moment gave him the full possession of a happiness, which not

half an hour before he had not even the least thought of ever soliciting.

Scarce had he time to express the transports of his gratitude for the unhop'd favours he had received, when Liberia, hearing the sound of voices on the stairs, rang her bell to know who was there; on which her woman immediately came in, and told her that two ladies, who had been at Lady Racket's assembly, and seeing her leave the company so abruptly, had called to know the occasion, fearing she might be indisposed.

' Lord! how impertinent is some people's friendship!' cried Liberia. ' Why did you not tell them I was well, but very busy?'—' I did so, Madam,' replied the other; ' and that you was shut up in your closet writing letters; but they insisted on seeing you, ran up stairs in spite of me, and are now in the drawing-room.'

' Well, there is no remedy for these things,' said she; ' I must go to them, or they will burst in upon me here.— You will excuse me, Mr. Jessamy; it is highly improper you should be seen:' then turning to her woman—' shew him down the back-stairs,' added she, ' with as little noise as you can.'

She said no more, but went out of the room to receive her company; and Jemmy suffered himself to be conducted by her woman in the manner she had ordered.

CHAP. IX.

HAS SOMETHING IN IT OF THE MARVELLOUS.

THOUGH Jemmy had as small a share of vanity in his composition as any man that ever lived, yet it would have been a thing almost supernatural in him, if an adventure, such as he had just now met with, had not elated a heart as unexperienced as was his. Liberia was a woman of distinction, young, beautiful, and had every requisite to render her the delight and admiration of mankind; to what else, then, but a peculiar liking of his person and behaviour, could it seem possible to him to impute the concessions she had made?

It is not to be understood, however, that the pleasing sensation he felt at this event proceeded from the gratification

of any passion he had entertained for the lady, who so highly had obliged him: on the contrary, his affection for Jenny was a sure defence from the attacks of any other charms; he had often seen Liberia, had thought her a fine woman, as every one did; but he had never been touched with the least spark of an amorous desire on her account; nor, on looking on her, had even considered the difference of sexes. But though what had happened between them was merely casual on his side, yet he could not help believing that it was a previous inclination on her's which alone could have excited her to act in the manner she had done.

The hurry in which they were compelled to part took from him all opportunity of testifying that desire of continuing a correspondence with her, which otherwise he thought she would have had reason to expect; and which even gratitude, politeness, and even common good-nature, would have exacted from him.

He therefore went the next morning to her house, certain in his mind of meeting with a reception suitable to the kindness she had given him such proofs of the night before. She was just dressed, and going to court; but, on his sending up his name, gave orders for his admittance; the servant, who introduced him withdrawing, he approached to salute her with the air and freedom of a favoured lover.

But how unspeakable was his surprise, when, going to take her in his arms, she started back, and with a countenance all awful and austere—'Hold off, Sir,' said she; 'this is a familiarity neither becoming you to take, nor me to grant.' The confusion he was in not permitting him to make any immediate reply—'I do not now,' continued she, 'owe fifty pieces to you.'

'No, Madam,' replied he, a little recovering himself; 'but you owe me a heart in return for that I have devoted to you.'—'I have nothing to do with your heart,' resumed she; 'and, as for mine, it is my husband's due.'—'If you really think so, Madam,' cried he, 'wherefore did you flatter me last night with having so large a part?'—'What happened last night,' said she, 'was merely accidental: I had lost all my money, and

'the debts we contract at play, you know, are debts of honour; but where my own is not concerned, be assured I shall always have a just regard for that of my husband.'

In spite of the consternation Jemmy was in, he could not refrain smiling at the distinction this lady made; and, with an air which had something of contemptuous in it—'I thought, Madam,' said he, 'that the honour of the husband and the wife had always been inseparable.'

'They are so, I allow,' answered she; 'but necessity sometimes compels a woman to do what otherwise she would not be guilty of: therefore I beg you will think no more of what has happened; it was a foolish affair, indeed; but, as it cannot be recalled, should be forgotten.'

He was about to make some reply, which it is likely would not have been very pleasing to her, but she went to the door, and called to know if the chariot was ready; and being told it was—'Adieu, Mr. Jessamy,' said she; 'I am obliged to attend the princess. I hope, whenever we meet, you will always treat me as the wife of Lord ***.'

She had no sooner spoke these words, than she shot like lightning out of the room, leaving Jemmy in a situation of mind not easy to be described, or even conceived, by any one who has not been under the same circumstances.

It was not that his pride was so much mortified at this unexpected rebuff, as his comprehension was confounded at it's being given: the more he endeavoured to fathom the mysterious meaning, the more he was absorbed in wonder; in fine, he knew not what to think, nor by what motive to account for a proceeding so strange, so contradictory to the very nature of the sex.

The first shock of any thing is very difficult to be concealed; the spirits, when suddenly alarmed, are in a hurry for a while, then sink into as extreme a languor. Jemmy dined that day at a tavern, by an appointment he had made with some gentlemen of his acquaintance; but neither their conversation, nor the glass, which went briskly about, had the power of dissipating his chagrin, or driving Liberia entirely from his thoughts.

The least air of seriousness in persons
of

of an extraordinary vivacity cannot fail of being taken notice of. Jemmy was looked upon as the life and soul of all the company he went into; and now to find him, instead of inspiring others with good-humour, stand in need of being inspired himself, made every one desirous of knowing what had occasioned this sudden transformation; but the affair was not a thing to be talked on, and he evaded giving any direct answer to the questions put to him on this head.

He did not long, however, preserve a taciturnity on this occasion, which was pretty painful to him: the company being broke up, and only one gentleman, with whom he had a greater intimacy than with any of the others, staying behind, he could not forbear speaking of what so much engrossed his thoughts. In fine, he related to him the whole history of his late whimsical adventure, concealing only the name of the heroine concerned in it.

But how strangely was he disappointed, when, instead of hearing his friend express some astonishment, as he expected he would have done, at an event so new and uncommon, he only burst into such a violent fit of laughter as hindered him from speaking for some moments!

'What!' cried Jemmy; 'the story I have been telling you is too romantic to be believed; and you suspect I have been endeavouring all this while to impose upon your understanding an invention of my own, in the room of a real fact?'

'No, upon my word,' replied the other; 'I am so confident of the truth of all you have repeated, that, upon occasion, I would be your voucher for every particular of it: but what made me so merry was, the great care you have taken in keeping the name of this fine lady a secret. What will you say now,' continued he, 'if I tell you at once, that I am certain no woman but Liberia is capable of behaving in the manner you have described?'

Liberia herself had scarce given Jemmy more surprize than his friend did in mentioning her as the person they were talking of. 'Liberia!' cried he. 'What have I said to raise such a conjecture in you?'

'Nothing, upon my soul!' answered the other: 'you have nothing to ac-

cuse yourself of in this point, and might have told the story to five hundred people without one of them being able to guess at the woman. It is not my penetration, but my experience, has let me into the secret of this matter: and, to make you master of another, I must tell you, that I have been beforehand with you.'

Jemmy not perfectly comprehending these words, asked what he meant.

'It happened,' said he, 'the other day, that one evening I played at the same table with this extraordinary lady: I swept the stakes, and she being out of cash, we went on upon credit; Fortune was still on my side; she lost a considerable sum to me, which I had the same equivalent for that she bestowed on you; and when I waited on her some days afterwards, in order to repeat my devoirs, received also just the same repulse you did; and found that it was her humour—no play, no love.'

'Then neither of us,' cried Jemmy, 'are obliged for the favours we have received to an amorous inclination on her part?'—'No, faith,' replied his friend; 'I rather take her to be one of the insensibles that way: but her lust for gaming is insatiate; she would be eternally at it; there all the passions of her soul are centered; and though at present a professed enemy to religion, would be the greatest devotee imaginable, were she once persuaded there were gaming-tables in heaven.'

'In fine, my dear Jemmy,' pursued he, 'the case stands thus: she loses more at play in one month, perhaps, than the rent-roll of Lord ***'s estate produces in a year; and being, either through fear or tenderness, unwilling to make him acquainted with her ill-luck, prudently takes the method you and I have experienced of satisfying the winners, and thinks herself no ill wife in so doing; since she forfeits her husband's honour only to preserve his peace, and never repeats her transgression with the same man, unless compelled to it by a second necessity of the like nature.'

Jemmy being now, by this detail, entirely freed from the perplexity of thought which the first surprize at the strangeness of Liberia's behaviour had involved him in, it is not to be doubt-

ed but that these two young gentlemen were pleasant enough on the affair in question, and mutually laughed at each other for the disappointment each of them had received, in imagining they had been favoured with a peculiar liking by that lady.

Neither of them having any engagements on their hands, they passed the whole evening together till the night was very far advanced, and called them to repose; during all which time little else but Liberia was talked on.

But as the repetition of a conversation, founded on such a topick, might not be very agreeable to such of our readers as we should be most studious to oblige; and, besides, would not be at all material to the business of this history; we may reasonably hope being easily excused for passing it over in silence.

CHAP. X.

AFFORDS BUT SMALL MATTER OF ENTERTAINMENT; YET, IF WELL CONSIDERED, MAY BE OF SINGULAR USE TO SOME READERS.

THERE is a certain haughty selfishness almost inherent to old age, which will not let people, when they come to be anything advanced in years, allow the least share of understanding in those of a younger sort; they treat them as mere idiots, incapable of comparing, judging, or even of knowing right from wrong.

But this is a partiality which betrays that want of discernment in themselves which they accuse in others. If youth, through too much fire, is addicted to vanity, rashness, and impetuosity; age, through too much phlegm, is no less liable to peevishness, obstinacy, and pride: in both the faults of constitution have but too great an effect upon the will, and deprive reason of half its force.

The faculties of the mind certainly decay, and grow weaker in proportion as the vigour of the body is impaired; a keenness of conception, a readiness of thought, and what is generally called wit, are the gifts of youth; when the organs, through which the soul is said to operate, are in their full strength as nature made them, unobstructed by dis-

eases, and unworn by time. Age is chiefly wise by experience, and by improving those observations which a long series of years had treasured up. It must therefore be allowed, that young people are far from being incapable of making the most just reflections; but the baits of sense, the excitements of pleasure, and the whirl of a thousand different passions, which incessantly agitate the ideas, prevent those reflections from making any lasting impression, and consequently from being of any real use in regulating their actions; so that they can be said to be discreet only by starts; and it is in this alone that all the boasted advantages of age consist.

Nothing was ever more strictly true than what that celebrated poet, Mr. Dryden, says, when, speaking of the difference between youth and age, he expresses the whole sense of the argument in these two equally elegant and comprehensive lines.

‘ Experience vainly in our youth is sought;
‘ And, by age purchas’d, is too dearly bought.’

Our Jemmy was one of those who never did any thing which reason could condemn, without being immediately self-convicted and ashamed of his error; though, as I said before, through the fire of youth, the enchantments of pleasure, and the prevalence of example, he could not avoid falling again into the same. As to play in particular, without any extraordinary propensity of his own, he was frequently drawn in to make a party at several gaming-tables, both private and publick; yet did he never reflect on what money he had lost, without being convinced he could not have disposed of it in a worse way; nor did he ever win of any gentleman, whose circumstances he knew could not well bear a diminution, without being shocked to the soul for having been one of those who had contributed to his misfortune.

He was perfectly sensible both of the vice and folly of gaming, as at present practised among almost all degrees of people; and stood amazed whenever he recollected, that he had seen men of the first figure and fortune in the kingdom not only condescend to mix in company with the common sharpers and gamblers of the town, but also to make use of the same low arts they did, in order

order to force chance, as it were, to be their friend.

He could not think, without a mixture of pity and contempt, on those who, neglecting the accounts of their estates, and trusting all to their stewards and bailiffs, boasted how well they were versed in Mr. Hoyle's calculation in the cutting of a pack of cards, and swear five pieces an hour was too small pay for the instructions of so learned a doctor in the great, mysterious, and most polite science of gaming.

He very often ran over in his mind all the various amusements of the town; and on comparing them with this of gaming, none of them seemed to him to have so small a plea for engrossing either the time or attention of a man of sense and honour.

'Every other pleasure or diversion,' said he within himself, 'have something in them deserving that name; they either regale the senses, or exercise the body, or relieve the mind: but gaming is the contrary of all these; it impedes the gratification of our most natural appetites, it enervates the limbs with too long sitting, it racks the brain with cares, it fills the bosom with anxieties, and, in fine, is a fatigue, which, were it not the effect of our own free choice, would be intolerable.

'Nor is this all,' would he sometimes add; 'an inordinate love of gaming certainly proceeds from avarice, the most sordid passion of the heart, and consequently destroys all that is generous, noble, and sincere; deadens that social feel, that kindly warmth, which nature has implanted in us towards our fellow-creatures; and renders the man devoted to this vice capable of no other wish than to enjoy the infamous triumph of bearing off the spoils of him he plays against, though it should even happen to be one he calls his friend, or one who must be entirely ruined by the loss of what he is now in possession of, through the favour of fortune, or a superior skill in the destructive art.'

He concluded from all this, that to undo others, or to be undone one's self, was the almost certain consequence of gaming high; for which reason he made many resolutions to avoid it as much as possible; and indeed persisted in them more than could be well ex-

pected from a man of his gay temper, and who, by the company he kept, was continually surrounded with temptations of that sort.

But if he thought the love of play so pernicious a thing in those of his own sex, in what light must he behold it in regard to those of the other? He had read some old mufty authors, who maintained that modesty was a peculiar characteristick of womanhood; that an innocence of deportment was the chief beauty of a virgin; and oeconomy in private, and a decent reserve in publick, that of a married woman: and he could not get it out of his head but that these maxims were just contrary, as they were to what he had seen practised at play by some ladies, who pass for patterns of politeness and fashionable good-breeding; and in comparing the difference, he could not forbear crying out — 'Sure, when these books were wrote, gaming was a thing never heard of among women!'

These having always been his notions, it could not be otherwise but that the example of Liberia must greatly contribute to fortify them in him, as he now experienced what he had many times been told by those better acquainted with the ladies, that those debts which are called debts of honour, are often discharged by loss of honour.

'What an amiable figure in life might this woman make,' said he, speaking of Liberia, 'if it were not for this mad attachment to gaming! I dare believe she has no vicious inclinations of her own; and her quality and marriage with Lord *** defend her from all impertinent addresses of our sex. How strange, then, is the infatuation which compels her to run the fatal risque of being reduced to yield to such condescensions as otherwise her pride would scorn, and her virtue shudder at!'

He never ruminated in this manner without falling immediately after into a profound reverie; which, whoever had seen him in, would not have taken him for that gay, laughing, spiritous creature he appeared at other times: but it generally happens, that persons of that humour, when they think at all, think more deeply than those of a heavy and phlegmatick disposition.

The many mischiefs which sometimes

times befall the fair-sex, by indulging themselves in this dangerous amusement, made him tremble for Jenny: he knew she played occasionally; but though he had never heard her testify any extraordinary pleasure in it, yet he could not assure himself that she might not, by degrees, be drawn into a better liking of it, and consequently become liable to the same inconveniences to which so many others of her sex were every day subjected.

Love, friendship, and the consideration of his own interest and honour, as Jenny was one day to become his wife, obliged him therefore to do every thing in his power to prevent so great an evil; nor could he think of any method more effectual for that end, than by reminding her, in a delicate way, and without seeming to do it with design, of the dangers to which women who love play could not fail of being exposed.

He had no sooner thought on this, than he resolved to put it into immediate execution; and, to give the greater weight to what he intended to say, ransacked his memory for all the alarming circumstances of a gaming-table, that he had ever seen or heard of.

CHAP. XI.

A LITTLE MORE TO THE PURPOSE.

JEMMY knew that his fair mistress kept a great deal of company, and that most of her afternoons were taken up with giving and receiving visits: whenever, therefore, he had any particular conversation to entertain her with, he always went to her in a morning. The business he had to communicate seeming to him of too much importance to be delayed, his impatience carried him thither more early than was his custom; yet he had not the satisfaction of finding her alone; the two lovely daughters of Mrs. G—— were just gone up stairs before him: but he was not much disconcerted at their presence, as he saw they were in their dishabille, and he could not doubt but that the hour of the day would soon call them home, in order to ornament those charms which were too much admired not to make them desirous of shewing them to the best advantage, whenever they appeared in publick places, which they seldom

or never failed to take all opportunities of doing.

These ladies, whose history it is probable will, some time or other, make a very interesting figure in the world, were distinguished more by the name of the Two Beautiful Sisters than that of their family: they were, indeed, lovely beyond what language can describe, or fancy, without seeing them, delineate. Both of them were tall, finely shaped, of a most graceful air, had the most regular features; eyes at once commanding and attracting love and admiration; and so equally had Nature dealt her bounties to them, that hard it is to say which of them excelled in any one of those perfections which each possessed in so lavish abundance.

But being so alike beautiful was certainly a misfortune to them; for each seeming most lovely when the other was away, yet neither of them having the preference when together, the beholder's eye was kept in continual motion, without knowing on which to fix: this it was which, joined with some other considerations not my business to enquire into, perhaps kept them much longer from being married than many who have not the thousandth part of their power of charming.

This consideration, however, seemed to have but little weight with them: they lived in the most perfect harmony; were rarely seen asunder, whether at the Play, the Opera, the Court, the Mall, Vauxhall, Ranelagh; in all places of resort they were inseparable as the twin stars that grace the zodiack.

In fine, so much the same, in every respect, were this pair of charmers, that, if Mr. Waller had lived in their days, one would have imagined he could have no other in his eyes when he wrote these lines—

- ‘ Not the silver doves that fly,
- ‘ Yok’d in Cytherea’s car;
- ‘ Not the wings which soar so high,
- ‘ And convey her son so far;
- ‘ Are so lovely, sweet, and fair,
- ‘ Or do more ennobel love,
- ‘ Are so choicely-match’d a pair,
- ‘ Or with more consent do move.’

Fortunately for Jemmy’s design, it fell out that the conversation turned chiefly on the subject of gaming, on account of a certain lady, who, having

no more than five and twenty hundred pounds per annum, had, according to her own confession, lost nine thousand in one season at play.

Jenny expressed, with so much warmth and spirit, the contempt she had of those who made a kind of business or trade, as it were, of this amusement, as sufficiently denoted the sincerity of her heart while she was speaking, and gave Jemmy an infinite satisfaction in hearing her.

The two beautiful sisters made but a very short visit, as Jemmy had conjectured; and, after they were gone, he resumed the topick they had been talking on: 'You women,' said he, smiling, 'have much the advantage over us men; some of you, at least, have been ingenious enough to have found out a very easy method of discharging all the debts you contract at play. I could give you,' continued he, 'a thousand instances of what I say; but I shall content myself with only one, in which a friend of mine made me the confidante, and on whose veracity I dare as much depend as if I had been in his place. He was one of the chief parties concerned in it.'

Finding Jenny looked earnestly upon him all the time he had been speaking, and seemed in a disposition to give attention to every thing he said upon that subject, he went on, and related to her, with as much brevity and modesty as such an affair would permit, all that had passed between himself, Liberia, and the other gentleman, who had been a sharer with him in the favour of that lady; hiding from her only the names, and some few circumstances, which might have given her room to guess more than he wished she should do.

Jenny was shocked to the very soul at this recital. She had been witness of many extravagances that women who devote themselves to gaming are often guilty of; she knew very well that they reduced themselves to great straits, sometimes even to the total ruin of their own and husband's fortune; but could never have imagined that any of them, merely for the sake of play, would have proceeded to those frightful lengths she now was told of.

After having expressed some part of her astonishment and indignation at such a depravity of nature—'How

'ought,' cried she, 'every one to guard against the first approaches of this dangerous propensity!' And then again—'Bless me!' added she, 'how can any one, who has a tongue to speak, and common sense to dictate what they say, lavish those hours in gaming which might be passed in an agreeable and improving conversation? If no other ill consequences than barely loss of time attended it, methinks it were enough to hinder any one, not altogether void of reason, from pursuing, with the eagerness some do, an amusement, at the best, trifling and idle!'

It is not to be doubted but that Jemmy was quite transported at finding in his fair mistress sentiments so just, and so exactly conformable to those he had, with the greatest ardency, wished she should be inspired with: he had no words which seemed to him sufficient to praise, as they deserved, her prudence and penetration; yet said enough on that occasion to put her modesty to the blush.

'Do not fancy me to be possessed of more merit than I have,' answered she: 'I believe that many of our sex, with as little inclination as myself to play, have been enticed to it by the examples of those whom we are so silly as to think it an honour to imitate, even in their vices. Whatever we see practised by those of the great world becomes a law to us of the inferior class; and I can tell you, that it is not owing to my own judgment, but to mere accident, that I am brought to a more reasonable way of thinking.'

'You must know,' continued she, 'that a lady, who is a distant relation of mine, took me with her one evening to the route of a person of condition: there was a prodigious deal of company, three large rooms made into one, and no less than fourteen tables set out for different sorts of gaming. Every body played; and, though I never was fond of cards, yet was ashamed, in so publick an assembly, not to do as others did; so engaged myself with a party who were sitting down to whist. Either through want of skill or attention, I soon lost twenty pieces, which was all I had about me at that time: but having no notion

‘ of giving over, as the others were for continuing, I went to my cousin, who was at quadrille at another table, in order to get a fresh supply from her; but, to my great mortification, found she was entirely stripped as well as myself; and there was none of the company with whom I was intimate enough to become a borrower.

‘ I must confess,’ pursued she, ‘ that I then was silly enough to be heartily vexed at this disappointment, and retired to the other end of the room, debating within myself whether I should not go quite away, or see how my cousin would behave, who, I found, was still at play with the same party she had been engaged in. As I was in this perplexity, the Earl of ****, who had betted at our table, and been witness both of my ill-luck and present confusion, came towards me; and putting a purse, that seemed very weighty, into my hand, which he held fast grasped between both his—“ It is pity,” said he, “ that so fine a young lady should be deprived of her diversion on any account whatever, much less on that of a little paltry cash: accept these few pieces, they may be more lucky to you than your own; but, if it prove otherwise, command as many from me as you shall stand in need of.”

‘ I protest to you,’ went she still on, that I was so confounded at finding myself accosted in this manner, that I had neither courage nor presence of mind enough to resent, at first, so impudent an overture, as I ought to have done; and it was the simplicity of my behaviour which perhaps encouraged him to proceed: for I only asking what his lordship meant, he replied, with an air and voice sufficiently explanatory of the base thoughts he had of me—“ I mean to devote myself, and all I have, at the altar of your charms; happy if you smile upon the sacrifice!”

‘ Never was any poor creature so overwhelmed with different passions as I then was! Amazement, shame, disdain, and rage, at once rose in my bosom, and almost stopped the passage of my breath! I forgot all respect of his birth and place; and throwing the purse he had given me upon the floor—“ Carry your offers,” said I,

“ to those who want them; I despise both them and the hand from which they came!”

‘ With these words I burst from him, and rejoined the company. My cousin was still playing, having borrowed of some person she was acquainted with; and I kept leaning over the back of her chair all the time we staid. His lordship passed by me more than once, and discovered by his looks that he was no less affronted at my behaviour than I had been at his; which, contrary to what it is likely his vanity might make him imagine, gave me more satisfaction than discontent.

‘ I was, however, very much agitated to think that any man, how great soever, had dared to treat me with the freedom he had done. On coming home, I complained of it to my cousin; but she only ridiculed me for it; told me I was a novice in the ways of the town; that, if she had been in my place, she would have taken his money, and laughed at him afterwards for bestowing it; for which I liked her so ill, that I have ever since avoided her as much as possible.

‘ Thus you see, my dear Jemmy,’ added she, on concluding her little narrative, ‘ that my dislike of gaming is not owing to my prudence in considering the folly of it; for I confess I never thought much about the matter, but merely to Lord ****’s behaviour; for certainly no young woman of common modesty, if treated as I was, will ever indulge herself in an amusement that renders her virtue liable to be exposed to such insolent attacks!’

It was not in the power of all she could say, however, to make Jemmy desist from giving her the praises she deserved, nor from entertaining in his mind the highest idea of her understanding, as well as her virtue; inasmuch that, could he have thought himself equally qualified in what might be expected from a husband, as she was in every thing that could be wished for in a wife, he would have seen no reason for delaying their mutual happiness for one moment.

But a just consciousness of some little frailties which afforded him too much pleasure to be able as yet to rectify,

tify, made him forbear to press her on the subject of their marriage for the present.

C H A P. XII.

CONTAINS A VERY NOTABLE INSTANCE OF FRIENDSHIP A-LA-MODE.

WHILE our lovers were thus endeavouring to form their minds in such a manner as should enable them to render each other perfectly happy when they should come to be united together, there were not wanting some who made it their chief study to contrive the means of separating them for ever.

Jemmy had contracted a very numerous acquaintance since his father's death, many of whom had a large share of his esteem and friendship; but there was one, above the rest, whose humour and behaviour he was particularly taken with, and with whom he conversed with the most unreserved freedom.

This gentleman, who was called Bellpine, was descended from a very ancient family; and had been, through the extravagance and ill-management of his father, deprived of all that ought to have been his patrimony, except two hundred pounds a year, which had been settled upon his mother by way of jointure, and could not be dissipated.

He had, notwithstanding, been flattered with the expectation of being one day in possession of an estate of near three thousand pounds per annum, being the undoubted heir of an uncle, who, having lived a bachelor till a very advanced age, there was not the least probability of his ever changing his condition, much less of his having any children, even in case such a thing should happen: and this dependance it was that hindered him from being bred up to any business or profession, and also gave him an air of self-sufficiency, in some measure, conformable to the fortune he so reasonably hoped to become master of.

This uncle, however, to the surprise of all that knew him, at the age of eighty-two, and equally laden with infirmities and years, took it into his head to marry a daughter of one of his tenants in the country; a girl scarce nineteen.

An accident such as this could not, when it happened, but give a very great shock to Bellpine, as he could not assure himself but that, in spite of his uncle's great age, a child, some way or other, might come, and cut him off at once from the inheritance he had been made to depend upon. Yet did he not suffer his spirits to sink on this occasion; he rather exerted them all, in order to find some means to remedy, or at least to abate, the asperity of this disappointment: the most feasible ones, he thought, would be to procure, if possible, some genteel employment about court; and, at the same time, make his addresses to some lady of an handsome fortune for a wife.

He was soliciting at the levees of the great for the accomplishment of his first project; and casting about in his mind where he should direct his courtship with the utmost probability of succeeding in the other, when he commenced an acquaintance with Jemmy: chance brought them at first together; and a mutual liking of each other's conversation, by degrees, grew up to that intimacy between them already mentioned.

Jemmy was of the most open communicative disposition that man could possibly be; he had very few affairs in life which he made secrets of to any of those whom he called his friends: but with Bellpine he maintained no reserve; he made him the confidante of all his looser pleasures; his foibles, his very thoughts, were not concealed from him; it therefore may be supposed that he disguised not the honourable affection he had for Jenny; the care that both their parents had taken to bring them up in notions of being united together when they arrived at years of maturity; and also the reasons urged on her side, and agreed to on his, for delaying, for some time, the celebration of their nuptials.

As his heart was warm with a passion which duty, and the custom of looking on her as the person ordained for his wife, had at first inspired him with, and a just sensibility of the many amiable qualities she was mistress of had afterwards greatly heightened in him, he spoke of her in a manner sufficient to enflame the heart of the hearer with envy at his happiness: in this, indeed, it must be confessed that he shewed more

sincerity than prudence; but, as one of our poets observes—

‘ Those free from guile themselves, can scarce
‘ believe
‘ That others will be false.’——

Nor was this all: he contented not himself with giving him a bare idea of what she was; he introduced him to her acquaintance; he frequently made him a partner in his visits to her, recommending him as a person highly worthy of her esteem and friendship; and, in fine, spoke of him in terms which obliged her to treat him as such; little, alas! suspecting that, while doing this, he was whetting the edge of a sword that might one day be pointed against his own bosom.

Bellpine was far from being the man the honest heart of Jemmy mistook him for: he was possessed, it is true, of many accomplishments both natural and acquired, but had no fund of honour or generosity: he knew perfectly how to insinuate himself into the good graces of those he conversed with; but thought himself not bound to make an adequate return for any favours he received from them; all his wishes were centered in self-gratification; and no consideration for others had ever any weight to make him desist from that favourite pursuit.

But being of a disposition such as I have described, it is not to be wondered at that the fine person and large fortune of Jenny should make him envy the happiness of him who was to be the possessor of that double treasure: he loved her on the score of her beauty, her wit, and the many amiable qualities he had observed in her; but adored her as being the mistress of what he so much wanted; and, filled with the idea of those advantages he might reap in an alliance with her, made him resolve on the attempt, and to take all the methods his inventive fancy could inspire to alienate her affections from his friend.

He had often heard Jemmy say, that the agreement between them for contracting the celebration of their marriage had been first proposed by her; from whence he concluded, that the passion she had for him was not so violent but that it might be easily withdrawn, if she was once made to believe there was a decay in that he professed for her.

He was sensible, notwithstanding, that there required a more than common share of caution and address in the management of this design; he saw very well, that Jenny had a great deal of sagacity and penetration; it behoved him, therefore, either to throw such a temptation in Jemmy's way as should render him in effect ungrateful and perfidious, or contrive such appearances of his being so, as could not be discovered from reality by human wit.

With the first of these measures he commenced the prosecution of his design, though, of the two, the least feasible to be accomplished, as it was very difficult to find a woman who excelled Jenny in any one perfection that can attract the eye, or captivate the heart: ‘ Love,’ said he within himself, ‘ is seldom so much the effect of reason as of fancy; and if I can be so lucky as to present an object capable of firing the heart of this too happy rival with an amorous flame, and she has virtue or cunning enough to refuse the gratification on any other terms than those of marriage, it may so happen, that all the merits of Jenny, and his engagements with her, will be too light to overbalance inclination.’

He knew that Jemmy was extremely fond of musick; he had seen him in the utmost rapture on hearing a melodious voice, or an instrument finely played upon; and it was by this bait he hoped to allure Jemmy from his vows, or at least to draw him into such a manner of behaviour as should pique the pride of Jenny, and render her indifferent towards him.

To dissolve the cement of that tender affection, with which they now regarded each other, would go a great way towards gaining the point he aimed at; he flattered himself, that if he could once set them at variance, he was at present enough in Jenny's favour to be able to obtain the first share in her tenderness, when taken off from the man who now engrossed it.

The person whose charms he intended as the snare to entrap the constancy of Jemmy was called Miss Chit: she passed, in the opinion of most people, for the daughter of a gentleman distinguished in the world for nothing so much as for being her father; but it was whispered, by those who pretended to be connoisseurs in the secret intrigues of the

the great, that she really sprung from parents of a much more elevated station.

She was young, handsome, well-shaped; and, though of somewhat too diminutive a stature, had an air and mien extremely striking; she wanted neither wit nor assurance to set off the talents she was mistress of to the best advantage; she was a great courtier, and perfectly skilled in all the rudiments of modish good-breeding: but the chief inducement that Bellpine had to make choice of her as an instrument of his purpose was this; Nature had given her a voice that seemed the very soul of harmony; and, when accompanied by her harpsichord, which she finely touched, the mellifluous sounds had power to calm the most raging passions of the mind, and convert all into love and soft desire; so that what the poet says of Mira, might be justly enough ascribed to her—

‘The wretch, who from her wit and beauty
‘flies,
‘If she but reach him with her voice, he dies.’

Bellpine frequently visited this lady, and was welcome to her on account of his facetious conversation, and the intelligence he picked up among his acquaintance, and was continually informing her of the intrigues of the town. As he was well received by her, he could not fail of being so by her father, who, it was easy to perceive, was but the second person in the family: standing thus as he did with both, it cannot be supposed he wanted interest to introduce any one he thought proper to her acquaintance. He would not, however, proceed too abruptly in the affair, as it might have spoiled all, if either party had suspected him of design; but watched an opportunity, when they were talking one day of musick, to ask Jemmy, in a careless manner, as if it were by chance, if he had ever heard Miss Chit sing and play.

‘No,’ replied he; ‘but I have heard she does both to very great perfection.’—‘I wonder,’ said the other, ‘that you should not have the curiosity to be a judge of her skill that way yourself, as you are so great a lover of musick!’

‘I have not the honour to be at all known to her,’ replied Jemmy; ‘nor have even ever seen her, any more than

‘en passant, once or twice I think at court, and two or three times in the Mall with Lady Fisk.’

‘I am pretty free there,’ cried Bellpine; ‘and if you have an inclination to hear this female Orpheus of the town, will take you with me, and also engage she shall give you a touch of her harmony, both vocal and instrumental; for, to do her justice, she has not the least reserve in this point; her harpsichord is never out of tune, nor her voice disconcerted with a cold.’

Jemmy expressed a great deal of satisfaction at this offer, but gave much more than what he felt himself to his pretended friend, who looked on the ready compliance he found in him as a happy beginning of the enterprize he had projected. They agreed to meet at White’s the next day, and then proceed on their visit to the lady.

C H A P. XIII.

IS FULL OF REMARKABLE AND INTERESTING PARTICULARS.

BELLPINE had no occasion to make any previous apology to Miss Chit for bringing a friend with him to visit her, having already taken that liberty without her being displeased with it, in favour of several of his companions, who had testified to him a desire of becoming acquainted with her.

But it was not in this manner he chose to introduce Jemmy: the plot he had laid required they should appear as agreeable as possible to each other; it was therefore highly necessary to prepossess her with such an idea of the person she was to see, as should make her neglect nothing that might set off all the charms she was mistress of to the best advantage. Having well considered within himself under what character a man was likely to appear in the eyes of a young, gay, vain woman, he went to her pretty early in the morning, and began with telling her he was come in behalf of a gentleman who had entreated him to be his intercessor for permission to wait on her with him that afternoon.

This formal speech from a man whose usual deportment might rather be accused of too little than too much ceremony, made her laugh very heartily: ‘Bless me,’ said she, ‘what romances have

‘ have you been reading! We are not, sure, running back to the days of O-roondates and Statyra. If you have any friend to bring here, what need all this prelude? You know very well that every one you introduce is welcome.’

Bellpine on this threw off the serious air he had affected, and resumed that free and undaunted one which was most natural to him: ‘ Faith, Madam,’ answered he, ‘ I can easily join with you in laughing at myself; I know I must make an odd figure in the grave strain, by the pains I took in putting it on; but I thought, as I was one of Cupid’s harbingers, my message ought to be delivered in somewhat above the common phrase.’

‘ A harbinger from Cupid!’ cried she; ‘ I find, then, you would persuade me you have this commission to me from a lover.’—‘ Most certainly,’ answered he; ‘ from one who is three parts so at least: he is already charmed with your face, your air, your shape; and there is only wanting your fine voice to compleat the conquest.’

‘ Of whom?’ demanded she. ‘ It is fit I should know the name of this new vassal.’—‘ Have a little patience,’ said he, ‘ and I will tell you every thing. In the first place, he is a young heir lately come to the possession of an estate sufficient to support a coach-and-six; in the next place, he is handsome, well-made, has as genteel an address as any man about town; lastly, he is allowed to have wit, honour, and good-nature; and his name is Jessamy.’

‘ I have seen that gentleman,’ returned she, somewhat seriously; ‘ and believe you have done him no more than justice in the representation you have made of him: but I have been told he is deeply engaged, and on the point of being married to a young lady of his own name; I think they call her Miss Jenny Jessamy.’

‘ Nothing in it, upon my honour!’ cried Bellpine; ‘ I can aver to you from my own knowledge, that there are no two people in the world of different sexes that have a more perfect indifference for each other: there was, indeed, such a thing intended for them by their fathers; but the old men are both dead; and you know, Madam, we young folks are apt to pay but

‘ little regard to the injunctions laid upon us by those who are no longer in a condition to resent our disobedience. It is true,’ continued this artful deceiver, ‘ they see each other very frequently, hold a good correspondence, converse as friends; but without one grain of inclination on either side. I am very well assured, by what I have heard both of them declare, that should either of them insist on the performance of the covenant made between their parents, an eternal breach must infallibly ensue.’

Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy kept too much company not to be well known in the polite world; their characters, their fortunes, and their mutual engagements, were no secret; they were the subjects of conversation among many who had not the least personal acquaintance with either of them; and it was a matter of surprize to every one, that a marriage which had so long ago been projected, was not as yet consummated.

As nobody had pretended to discover any reason for this unaccountable delay, Miss Chit might easily give credit to that which Bellpine now assigned for it. Bellpine watched her every look; and perceiving that his insinuations had wrought thus far on her belief, proceeded to what now seemed to him a task not difficult to be accomplished; that of persuading her Jemmy in reality felt some beginning of a passion for her.

‘ You cannot imagine,’ said he, ‘ with what raptures he expresses himself concerning you: the first time he saw you was at court; I was with him the same evening, and he could talk on nothing but you the whole time we were together. “ What eyes she has! how bright! how sparkling! “ What a mouth! what a finely turned—! How delicate is her shape! how enchanting is her air!”

‘ Hold, Mr. Bellpine!’ interrupted she, putting her hand before his mouth; ‘ for the sake of curiosity, no more! If you go on at this rate, I shall know beforehand, and he will have nothing new to say to me when he comes.’

‘ Nay,’ rejoined Bellpine, ‘ I do not suppose he will say much to you at this first visit, nor, perhaps, at the second, or even at the third. I have been told, by those who have experienced the passion, that a true lover never gets courage to declare what he feels

‘ feels to his mistress till half the town
 ‘ are apprized of it by his behaviour :
 ‘ but,’ pursued he, ‘ you will have pe-
 ‘ netration enough to read in his looks
 ‘ what his lips want boldness to reveal.’
 — ‘ Pish!’ says she, ‘ do you think I shall
 ‘ give myself the trouble to examine
 ‘ his looks ? It will be time enough for
 ‘ me to attend to them when his tongue
 ‘ shall have explained the dictates of
 ‘ his heart.’

They had some farther discourse on this head ; and, in spite of the careless air Miss Chit affected to put on, the cunning Bellpine saw the impression his words had made upon her ; and, after adding all that he thought necessary for strengthening it in her, took his leave, highly applauding himself in his mind for what he had done. He met Jemmy at the appointed hour at the chocolate-house, and about tea-time went with him on their purposed visit : on his sending up his name they were immediately shewed to the room where Miss Chit was sitting ; when he found, by the great care she had taken in her dress, and the exactness of every thing about her, that he had not flattered himself with a vain conjecture, but that she was indeed as desirous as he could wish of appearing lovely in the eyes of this new guest.

Jemmy, being presented to her by Bellpine, saluted her with the utmost gallantry ; she received him with a becoming modesty, which, notwithstanding, had something of inviting in it : the conversation at first turned only on general topics ; but Bellpine would not suffer it to continue so, and told her, in his usual free manner, that he should not think himself forgiven for the liberty he had taken, till she had obliged both him and his friend with a song and a touch of her harpsichord.

To this she replied, with a sprightly tone of voice and gesture, that whatever he might think of her, she had too much complaisance for a stranger, who seemed so well to deserve it, not to do every thing in her power to render the visit he had favoured her with agreeable to him. In speaking these words she sat down to her instrument ; and, without waiting for any more entreaties, began to sing one of the most favourite airs in Mr. Handel’s last oratorio.

As she had in reality a very fine voice, great skill in musick, and played admirably well, there was no occasion that

Jemmy should stretch truth to a pitch too high in expressing the pleasure he took in hearing her. But it was not in mere words alone he testified the mighty influence that the well-concerted notes had over him : he languished ; he died ; his soul seemed all absorbed, dissolved in extasy ; and he not only spoke, but looked in such a manner as, without being prepossessed, as she was, with an opinion of his having a passion for her, might well make her believe she had other charms for him besides those of her voice and skill in musick.

As often as she gave over, Bellpine pressed her to renew the harmony ; and sometimes Jemmy assumed the boldness to second a petition, which he was very sensible was made entirely on his account. The lady was not refractory to their united entreaties, and continued playing till her father came into her room. The usual compliments being passed, they all sat down, and entered into conversation ; but whatever subject was started by the old gentleman, either the one or the other of Miss Chit’s visitors had the address to turn it on the praise of musick, and the perfection which she had attained to in that science.

Jemmy said many things which might seem extravagant on this occasion ; but thinking he had staid long enough for a first visit, rose up, and was preparing to take his leave, when Mr. Chit, who had been tutored beforehand by his daughter how he should behave, would not suffer him to speak of going, seized upon his hat and gloves, and said, that if his daughter had afforded them any entertainment, it was owing to him for having provided the best masters for her ; and he therefore expected they would recompense him for it, by giving him their company the remainder of the evening ; adding, that supper was just ready to be served up.

Jemmy would fain have excused himself, as he had an appointment which he was very unwilling to break ; but there was no resisting the present kind compulsion, especially as Miss Chit condescended to join her entreaties with her father’s ; he therefore complied, and contented himself with sending an apology to those who expected his coming. The collation prepared for them was so elegant, the old gentleman’s conversation so facetious, and his daughter’s musick so delightful, that the night

was almost lost in morning-dawn, when Jemmy and his false friend came away: but what use the latter made of this long visit, the reader will very soon discover.

C H A P. XIV.

SEEMS BIG WITH THE PROMISE OF
SOME MIGHTY MATTERS HERE-
AFTER TO BE BROUGHT TO
LIGHT.

IT was so very late when the little company broke up, that Bellpine had no opportunity of putting any questions to Jemmy concerning his sentiments of the lady he had introduced him to; and as they lived different ways, they took leave of each other at Mr. Chit's door, without any farther speech that night. Full of impatience, however, for the success of his pernicious plot, he went pretty early the next morning to his house; and, according to his wish, found him quite alone, and not yet ready to go abroad. He was scarce sat down when he had the satisfaction of hearing Jemmy himself prepare the way for the conversation he intended to entertain him with, by thanking him for the pleasure he had enjoyed the night before through his means.

'I wish from my soul,' replied this wicked incendiary, 'that it were in my power to procure you a much more ample and substantial one: music indulges no more than a single sense; Miss Chit has charms that might engross the whole five. Ah, Jemmy!' continued he, embracing him, 'what a heaven it would be, after an hour or two of dalliance, to be lulled to sleep by that angelick voice, pressing, at the same time, the ruby lips whence the transporting sounds proceed! and then, ye gods, awake to new raptures and repeated bliss!'

Jemmy laughed heartily at the extasy which the other affected to feel through the force of imagination. 'You wish me happiness,' cried he; 'yet speak, methinks, as if you could not avoid being one of those who would envy me the possession of it: but, my dear friend,' added he, 'you have no need to be under any apprehensions on that score; for, to deal sincerely, I like Miss Chit as a musician, but shall never think of her as a woman.'

These words gave a most terrible shock to the high raised expectations of Bellpine; but, as he was master of an uncommon share of artifice, and an equal presence of mind, it was easy for him to conceal one emotion under the shew of another; and, starting back with a well-counterfeited surprize—'Impossible!' cried he; 'you cannot, sure, be so insensible, so altogether untouched with charms that half the town are running mad after!'

'You know,' answered Jemmy, with a very serious air, 'I am under engagements elsewhere, which will not permit me to make my addresses to her, or any other woman, upon honourable terms; and I cannot suppose they would be accepted by Miss Chit, if offered with a view of a different nature.'

'I cannot flatter you so far as that,' indeed, replied he, still disconcerted; and more so, when Jemmy hastily rejoined—'I wonder, Bellpine, that, having so just a sense of the lady's merit, you never made your court to her yourself?'

On an interrogatory so unthought-on, all his audacity forsook him; he was silent for some moments; but at length recovering himself, his ready wit furnished him with an excuse which seemed plausible enough, and was certainly the only one that could have had the least appearance of sincerity.

'I shall disguise nothing of the truth from you,' said he. 'To be plain, then, it is my vexatious circumstances which alone deter me; since my uncle has taken a step that may possibly deprive me of the inheritance I was born to expect, I have no dowry to offer with my services: a woman that has money demands a jointure adequate to the sum she brings; and for me to marry one whose only portion is her beauty and good qualities, would render both her and myself for ever miserable; so that, whether Miss Chit is or is not a fortune, she is quite out of the question with me as a wife.'

He spoke all this with so much seeming candour and openness of heart, that Jemmy thought himself more than ever confirmed in the opinion he had always entertained of the good sense and honour of his friend; and readily agreed with him, that where a marriage was consummated

consummated between two persons, neither of whom had a sufficient competency, it could not fail of making both parties equally unhappy, and also of entailing lasting wretchedness on their posterity. Bellpine soon grew weary of this discourse, as it had no connexion with his present views; and therefore made his visit much shorter than he at first had intended it, and retired to a place where he might give a loose to his discontent, and contrive some other means of bringing his designs to perfection, since those he had already essayed had proved so ineffectual.

As it was not in his power to make Jemmy become guilty in fact, his next resource was to make him appear so: to blacken him by any ill report directly to Jenny herself, he knew would be in vain, and treated with contempt by a woman of her penetration; he therefore took a more artful and more sure, though slow method of infusing the poison of jealousy and indignation into her soul: he gave it out in whispers, innuendoes, and dark hints, among those whom he found fond of scandal and of explaining mysteries of that kind, that Jemmy had an utter aversion to Jenny in his heart; that he was seeking some excuse to break entirely with her; and that it was Miss Chit who had caused this change in him; he had no great cause to doubt but that this rumour would spread from one to another through the town, and become so much the universal secret, that it could not fail of reaching Jenny's ears; and then he concluded that it would, by degrees, steal itself into her belief.

As Jemmy was a man of pleasure, and did not live without many transient amours, it may seem a little strange to some people that Bellpine, who, by his intimacy with him, could not be a stranger to the errors of his conduct, did not chuse to get communicated to Jenny such things as a very small enquiry would convince her were true, rather than to endeavour to alarm her with reports which had no foundation in fact. But this was not Bellpine's way of reasoning; he rightly judged, that a woman of Jenny's understanding might easily be brought to forgive the frailties of youth and nature in a man of Jemmy's gay and volatile disposition; but would be irrecon-

ciliable, implacable, if once made to believe he addressed any other upon honourable terms.

It is easy for persons capable of inventing falsehoods to propagate them in such a manner as to make them pass current for a time, and yet avoid any detection of their being the authors of it: it is not by saying directly a thing is so, that a story so much gains credit, as by half words, winks, nods, and other such like gestures; these are the traps which catch the unwary, and give an air of reality to that which has no existence. Bellpine, at least, was well versed in this art; and practised it with such success as to the matter in question, and was so far from being suspected of having raised this report, that he has often been asked by those who heard from other hands what his opinion was concerning the truth of it.

Jenny, on account of her many accomplishments and good nature, was so generally beloved by those who knew her, and her character in such estimation with those who were personally acquainted with her, that none could hear, without the most extreme surprise, that she was about to be forsaken by a man who, from his very infancy, had been taught to look upon her as his future wife, and for whom she made no secret of having the most tender affection. But whenever this subject was mentioned to Bellpine, as it frequently so happened, he affected to hang down his head and be entirely silent; or, if desired by some one or other of the company to speak his thoughts—'I am no judge of the affair,' would he say: 'Mr. Jessamy is my friend; and I should be loth to think him capable of a bad action. Miss Jenny is certainly a fine girl, and so is Miss Chit: if he has changed his sentiments, he, doubtless, has his reasons; but I know nothing of it.'

His intimacy with Jemmy was so well known, that these indeterminate answers from him gave more credit to the story than the most positive assurances given by any other person could have done. Nor was this all: to give the greater appearance of the truth of what he thought it was so much his interest to have believed, he contrived it so that Jemmy and Miss Chit should frequently be seen together in public

places, though, for the most part, they met without the least design on the side of either of them.

Jemmy, indeed, could not avoid being somewhat accessary in corroborating the aspersions cast upon himself: as he had been introduced to that young lady, and received by her in the manner above-mentioned, the complaisance due to her sex and rank, joined to the pleasure he took in hearing her sing and play, obliged him sometimes to visit her: Bellpine was generally with them; and when he was so, always found some pretext or other to draw them out where he knew there would be people who would not fail to take notice of their being together.

It requires more pains to be a villain than some people may imagine: besides imposing upon Jemmy, and making him act in a manner which shewed his sentiments to the world far different from what they were in reality, Bellpine had also another card to play, which cost him little less contrivance. As he had possessed Miss Chit with a belief that Jemmy was seriously inspired with a passion for her, and knew very well that gentleman's behaviour had not at all been conformable to the assurances he had given her on this account, it behoved him to reconcile this contradiction so as not to leave her any room to suspect the deception he had put upon her. He therefore continued, day by day, to carry her some fresh intelligence of the fine things Jemmy said of her; and insinuated, that there was a design on foot, which, when once executed, would afford him a plausible pretence for breaking off entirely with Jenny; and that then he would avow his passion, and declare himself only devoted to her.

Whether this young lady was absolutely convinced of the truth of what he said, I will not take upon me to determine; because, indeed, it is highly probable she never gave herself the trouble to examine the consistency of the story.

Dangerous, however, might such an imposition have been to some ladies to have been flattered with the hopes of an alliance with a man such as Jemmy, perfectly agreeable in his person, accomplished in his manners, and opulent in his fortune; and then to find at once all those golden expectations vanish into

air, might certainly have been fatal in it's consequences to a heart young, tender, and unexperienced in deceit. Happy was it for Miss Chit, in this point at least, that the variety of company, the many fine things said to her by persons of condition, and particularly the devoirs, whether feigned or real, of a certain foreign minister, hindered her from being too attentive to the idea which the artifices of Bellpine might otherwise have engrossed her with.

CHAP. XV.

CONTAINS AN EXAMPLE, THAT FOR A WOMAN TO BE TOO GOOD IS NOT ONE OF THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO BE FOUND IN HUMAN LIFE.

THOUGH the foregoing report, begun and industriously propagated by Bellpine, had spread itself through all the acquaintance both of Jemmy and Jenny, yet it did not presently reach the ears of either of them; and they went on, as they had been accustomed to do, communicating to each other every little adventure which fell into the way of each, provided they were such as might be, in any measure, conducive to the important end proposed, that of rectifying or improving their minds.

Among the many they recited to each other, some of which were too trifling to be inserted here, Jemmy happened upon one of a most extraordinary nature, and therefore must not be omitted: it was this.

He had been for some time pretty conversant with a gentleman named Kelsey; he was a man of family, fortune, good-sense, and a very agreeable companion; but one thing was said of him, that, in the opinion of all the discreet part of his acquaintance, tarnished the lustre of all his other qualities, that of his being a very bad husband to a most deserving wife.

This lady, to whom he had been married scarce a year, was very young, beautiful, and had every thing in her person to make her beloved; and was in high estimation for the strictness of her virtue, her piety, and the affability of her behaviour: how could it then but seem strange to Jemmy, that two per-

sons of the characters these bore in the world should not live happily together? He never heard any mention of the disagreement between them, without feeling a kind of painful curiosity for the cause; but he could find none who were able to give him any information in that point, though every one spoke loudly of the effects. Chance at last presented him with the wished-for discovery: a gentleman of distinction, a distant relation of Jemmy's, was to have a private concert at his own house; Jemmy was one of the invited persons, with leave to bring any friend with him whom he should think proper; on which he made choice of Kelsey, and accordingly made a visit to him on the morning of the day appointed, to desire he would accompany him to this entertainment, if not previously engaged to any other.

Mr. Kelsey, thanking him for the obliging offer he had made him, replied, that he had no engagement at all upon his hands: 'But if I had,' said he, 'I should be tempted to break through it, since I am certain none could afford me so much real pleasure as that of waiting on Mr. Jessamy any where; but more especially,' continued he, 'on an occasion so perfectly agreeable to my taste.'

Jemmy, after having made a suitable return to this compliment, was preparing to take leave, and desired that they might meet at White's Chocolate House about six: but the other would not suffer him to depart in this manner; he insisted on his staying to dine with him, and pass the time where he was till the hour arrived in which they should adjourn to a place more agreeable. Jemmy would have excused himself from dining, as he had not the honour, he said, to be known to his lady: to which Mr. Kelsey answered, that his wife was not ignorant of the respect due from her to any of her husband's friends.

The curiosity that Jemmy had for being an eye-witness of a lady's deportment whom he had heard so much of, and as yet had never seen, she seldom appearing in any publick place, prevailed with him at length to comply with her husband's request; they amused themselves with looking over some fine pieces of musick which Mr. Kelsey had that morning brought home in score,

till three o'clock, at which hour he had ordered dinner to be ready.

The clock having struck, that gentleman conducted his guest into the next room, where they found the side-board set out, the cloth laid, the corks of the bottles drawn, and every thing prepared for being served up; but no servant was in waiting; all was hushed and silent as though they had just rose from table, instead of not being as yet set down.

Mr. Kelsey waited some minutes, but at last rung the bell, on which the butler came up; on being asked if dinner was not ready, he replied, with some hesitation, that he would enquire of the cook, and then went hastily away; soon after Mr. Kelsey rung again, and another servant appeared, to whom his master making the same demand as to the former, answered bluntly, that his lady was not yet come out of her closet: 'Go, then, and call her,' said Mr. Kelsey. The fellow went; but returned immediately, and said the door was locked; and though he had both knocked and called could get no answer; on which Mr. Kelsey grew extremely red, and begging pardon of Jemmy for leaving him alone a moment, flew up stairs himself.

Jemmy was very much surprized at all this, but had not time to make any reflections on it. Mr. Kelsey came presently down, followed by his lady, a very lovely woman indeed; but seemed greatly disconcerted. Jemmy advanced to pay her the civilities of a stranger, which, in spite of the confusion she was in, she received with the utmost sweetness and good-breeding; and they all sat down to table. The first course was served up in an instant; the garnishing of the dishes was elegant enough, and inviting to the appetite, as doubtless what they contained would also have been, if not so much prolonged beyond the necessary time. Mr. Kelsey stuck his fork first into one thing and then into another, then threw it down, bit his lips, and seemed in great emotion.

Jemmy could be at no loss to guess the occasion: and, to palliate the discontent he saw him in, helped himself pretty plentifully out of that dish which was nearest to him: but never was any thing so spoiled; the truffles, morelles, artichokes, and other such things as

should embellish the sauce, were in a manner dissolved in it; and the meat itself wanted little of being so too; so that nothing but the bones discovered what it was. Yet Jemmy fell to eating heartily, crying that it was very fine, that it was dressed exactly to his taste; but this politeness in him did not restore the good-humour of his friend; the lady, too, was in some pain on seeing the ill effects which her staying too long in the closet had produced; and, addressing herself to Jemmy—‘I am afraid, Sir,’ said she, ‘that your complaisance at this time gets the better of your sincerity: what is here is very much over-done; but I hope we shall not find every thing so.’

As she ended these words, a servant set a fine hare upon the table; and Mr. Kelsey, flattering himself that his wife might be a true prophetess on this occasion, took up his knife and fork once more, in order to carve; but the skin was so dried by being kept at a distance from the fire, that he found some difficulty to penetrate it; and when with much labour he had done so, the flesh beneath fell spontaneously from the bones, and indeed was almost fit for pulverizing. Mr. Kelsey, who was naturally fiery, and apt to kindle on every little provocation, now lost all patience; he flung the dish from him with such a vehemence, that but for the footman’s agility in catching it between his hands, it must have fallen on the floor.

The lady, who was all confusion, said she was sorry and ashamed that it had happened so. ‘Sdeath, Madam!’ cried he, starting from the table, ‘does it ever happen otherwise? If you had even common decency, you would not treat me in this manner: can you find no time to pray but when dinner is coming upon table? Must my appetite continually be starved, my peace destroyed, my reputation scandalized, my friends affronted, and all through your unseasonable devotion?’—‘It is mighty well, my dear,’ replied she, rising; ‘it is mighty well: but I shall say no more; it is from Heaven alone that I must seek support, under the ill humour and intemperance of a husband.’ Then turning to Jemmy, asked his pardon for what had passed, and went hastily out of the room with eyes all bathed in tears.

‘Would to Heaven I had never seen your face!’ cried Mr. Kelsey furiously, and stamping with his foot as she was going out; but she took no notice either of his words or actions, and passed on as fast as she could. He continued walking about the room with gestures which evidently denoted the inward rage he was possessed of, while Jemmy laboured, though for some time in vain, to convince him that he was in the wrong to put himself into such agitations on account of an accident.

‘Call it not an accident, Mr. Jessamy!’ replied he: ‘what you have now been witness of has been almost every day repeated ever since our marriage. Oh!’ continued he, almost raving, ‘how I could curse the hour, the day, the institution, sacred as it is called, that joined together two such opposites!’

At last, however, the consideration he had for his friend got the better of the resentment he had against his wife; and sitting down again, and, making Jemmy do so also—‘I know not,’ said he, ‘whether I shall ever be forgiven for the rudeness I have been guilty of: you, indeed, suffered too much through the folly of my wife; and I ought not to have prolonged your penance by my ill-humour, notwithstanding the justifiableness of it, had I been alone.’

He then, without waiting for Jemmy’s reply, called to the butler, and asked him if there were any cold meats in the house that might supply the deficiency they had sustained: the man on this ran down stairs, and presently returned, followed by another servant with a large ham, of which a very little had been cut. ‘Come, my dear friend,’ said Mr. Kelsey, ‘a cold repast is better than none at all: this we had yesterday, and could not be spoiled, though the chickens about it fell to pieces of themselves, like the hare you just now saw.’ He said no more, but fell heartily on the ham before them. Jemmy, who for all his complaisance had made but half a dinner, followed his example; and a dessert, consisting of tarts, pitty-patties, jellies, fruits, and such like things, being afterwards placed upon the table, neither of these gentlemen had any reason to complain of their bad living that day.

When the cloth and servants were withdrawn,

withdrawn, and the bottle and the glasses were the sole witnesses of their conversation, Jemmy, finding the other was now in a disposition to bear it, began now to railly him a little on the subject of his late disquiets. 'Faith!' replied Mr. Kelsey, 'I have a true English stomach of my own, and cannot bear the least disappointment in victuals; and this fervour of devotion takes my wife at such odd periods, that, whether I have company, or am obliged to go out on business at an appointed hour, I never can be certain that dinner will be served according to the time.'

'This unhappy humour in her,' continued he, 'it is that drives me so much abroad; I am compelled by it to entertain my friends at a tavern, to transact all my affairs there; and sometimes, indeed, to refresh my own senses with peace, and a bit of meat dressed as it ought to be. How is it possible I should love home, when the very person in whose power it chiefly is to render it agreeable, exercises that power rather to create disgust than liking? I once loved her; and none but the herself could have weaned my heart from the tender passion I had for her: but, besides, whenever I complain of what you have seen, and some other irregularities in domestick life, she bursts into tears and reproaches; accuses me of unkindness, of intemperance, prophaneness to Heaven, of regarding too much the things of this world, and such like stuff; which, if I fly to avoid, I am at least justified in the poet's words—

"Clamours our privacies uneasy make,
Birds leave their nests disturbed, and beasts
their haunts forsake."

Jemmy, who could find little to say in the defence of Mrs. Kelsey, and who had too much complaisance and good-nature to say any thing against her, artfully waved the conversation, and started more agreeable subjects; between which and the bottle they passed the time till the hour arrived which called them to the concert. This being an entertainment adapted to the taste of both these gentlemen, it is not to be doubted but the pleasure they received in it atoned for all the mortifications of the preceding day: but, as it presented no-

thing material enough to acquaint the reader with, we shall make no farther mention of it.

CHAP. XVI.

TREATS ONLY ON SUCH MATTERS AS, IT IS HIGHLY PROBABLE, SOME READERS WILL BE APT TO SAY MIGHT HAVE BEEN RECITED IN A MORE LACONICK MANNER, IF NOT TOTALLY OMITTED; BUT AS THERE ARE OTHERS, THE AUTHOR IMAGINES MUCH THE GREATER NUMBER, WHO MAY BE OF A DIFFERENT OPINION, IT IS JUDGED PROPER THAT THE MAJORITY SHOULD BE OBLIGED.

JEMMY, to whom the riddle of Mr. Kelsey's disagreement with his wife was now fully explained, no sooner found himself at home, and alone, than he began to make the serious reflections both on the accident he had been witness of, and the real source from whence such unfortunate effects were originally derived.

'It is not,' said he within himself, 'youth, beauty, wealth, or even a mutual affection in the parties before marriage, that is sufficient to constitute their happiness, when once entered into that state: neither Mr. Kelsey nor his wife are wanting in any of those endowments or accomplishments which one would think necessary to endear them to each other; yet how miserable are they! It must therefore be, that a conformity of principles, a parity of sentiments and humours, and a certain sympathy of soul, ought to be the first links in the hymeneal chain; and, without them, all the others fall to the ground, and have no power to bind.'

'I think,' continued he, 'that my friend has every requisite for making a good husband, were it his lot to have been united to a woman of his own gay temper; and the lady, who now creates such uneasiness both to herself and him, would certainly have made no less excellent a wife, had she been married to an enthusiast.' On reasoning farther, under various discontents that so frequently disturb the felicity of conjugal life, he concluded,

cluded, that good-nature and similitude of disposition, though the last things considered, and seldom, if ever, enquired into, by the persons about to be united, were, indeed, the chief ingredients to make their future happiness.

These considerations led him into an examination of Jenny's behaviour, even from her infancy, with much greater attention than ever he had done before; and the more he did so now, the less he could find to wish were changed: nothing had ever appeared in her which seemed to him to stand in need of the least rectification; she had never betrayed a too strong attachment to any one thing; no caprice, no whimsical flights, no affectation, no pride of exciting the envy of her own sex, or of giving pain to those of the other. In her words and actions she preserved the happy medium of neither being too gay and giddy, nor too sullen and reserved: nor was all this mere outward shew; he could not suspect her of disguise, as he had known her before she could arrive at the power, even if she had the will, of pretending to be other than she really was.

Though he was in no haste to be married, yet, as he intended nothing more than being so, one time or other, great cause he had to thank Heaven for being so peculiarly propitious in the lot ordained for him: nor was he insensible or ungrateful for the bounty, and had so true an esteem and affection for his dear Jenny, that we may almost give it to the reader for a certainty, that no temptation whatever could have made him entertain the least thought of any other woman for a wife.

He went pretty early the next morning to her apartment, which he seldom failed to do, when he had no farther business than to give her the *bon jour*; but never when he had any thing to communicate in relation to the agreement made between them: he knew, indeed, that she had very little occasion for any lessons of improvement from the faults of others; but he took an infinite pleasure in hearing the judicious observations she always made on every occasion that presented itself to her. He met her at the door; her chair waited, and she was just ready to step into it. 'You are going out, I perceive,' said he; 'and I will not detain you.'—'Indeed but you shall,'

replied she; 'I was only going to chapel, which I can do as well in the afternoon.'

'But how,' rejoined he, 'shall I answer to myself for being an impediment to any act of religion?'—'Religion,' cried she, 'does not enjoin us to be rude or unkind to our friends; and I know not if a just observance of the duties of social life be not a more acceptable sacrifice to the Deity than all the oraisons our lips can utter.' She said no more; but, having dismissed the chairman, made Jemmy go upstairs; where she instantly followed him. As soon as they were sat down—'I dined yesterday,' said he, smiling, 'with a lady who would have thought herself guilty of the extremest impiety and prophaneness to have shewn half that complaisance to her husband which I have just now received from you.'

'She must then have very little affection for him indeed,' replied Jenny; 'and also be equally ignorant of the laws of the institution by which, as I take it, she is bound to oblige and to obey him in all reasonable things. But I see,' continued she, 'by your countenance, that you are big with some new intelligence; so, pray, do not delay letting me have it.'

Jemmy then made her an exact recital of the entertainment he had met with at Mr. Kelsey's; the brulée between the husband and the wife; the impatience of the one, and the provocation given for it by the other. Jenny laughed heartily at the beginning of the story, but grew more grave towards the latter end of it; and, perceiving he had concluded, gave her sentiments on what he had been telling her in these terms.

'Can any one take this for piety?' said she. 'I would not be so uncharitable as to think Mrs. Kelsey an hypocrite; but, certainly, such a behaviour has nothing in it of the air of true devotion!' To which he replied, that he must do her justice to believe, from what he could gather from the discourse he had afterwards with her husband, who was not in a disposition to be more favourable than the occasion required, that all the mistakes she is guilty of proceed entirely from too warm a zeal in what she thinks the duties of religion.

'There are hours enough,' said she,

‘to be spent in prayer, without breaking in upon those which the œconomy of the family requires. I am far from depreciating religious worship; but there are times for all things: and Mrs. Kelsey makes choice of such as are so utterly improper, as, if it really arises from piety, renders it, in my opinion, such a kind of piety as has little merit in it. I am rather afraid,’ continued she, after a pause, ‘that, through sloth, and a certain indolence in nature, she neglects paying that tribute to Heaven which is due from every reasonable creature at fit times; and at length, remembering her omission, runs to wipe off one fault by committing a still greater: for I would fain know, whether driving a husband to the extremes you say Mr. Kelsey is guilty of, be not a much worse error than even not praying at all? For my part,’ added she, with a more gay air, ‘I should have no notion of saving my own soul by doing what would infallibly ruin another’s; especially that of a person in whose happiness, both here and hereafter, I ought to take so great an interest.’

Jemmy had a very high regard both for the mysteries and duties of revealed religion; though, like most other gay gentlemen of his age, he was little practised in the rules: but, had he been a more strict observer of church discipline, he could not well have disapproved of the sentiments Jenny had declared. He told her she had argued like a casuist; and that he was sure there was never a clergyman in England but must agree with her on this point.

‘I do not know that,’ answered she; ‘but, I can tell you, I durst not speak in the manner I have done, without thinking I had sufficient authority for it, from a little account given to my father, by a very learned and worthy divine, of one of his parishioners. I was very young when I heard it; but, as it made a lasting impression on my mind, if you will afford me your attention, I will repeat it.’ Jemmy having assured her she would confer a very great obligation on him by so doing, she went on with her discourse in this manner.

‘The reverend gentleman I have mentioned,’ said she, ‘was not only

‘an excellent preacher, but also an excellent man; all his actions were so many precepts, and his example a kind of living law: for there was no virtue which he laboured to inspire in others that he did not, in the highest degree, put in practice himself. He frequently favoured my father with his company,’ continued she: ‘they were extremely intimate; and, when the two good old gentlemen got together, there never was a gap in conversation. One evening, in particular, he came to our house; and my father, who was at church that day, and found a very thin congregation, was beginning to lament to him the decay of religion; to which the doctor replied in these terms; I think I remember his very words: “Aye, Mr. Jessamy!” said he, “I am afraid indeed, that religion is at a very low ebb at this time; but we must not always impute the want of it to those who we do not see constantly at public worship, even though we should know they were not detained from it by any infirmity either of mind or of body: there are a thousand accidents which may intervene, and withhold them from the discharge of this duty; nay, in some cases, it may to happen that it is laudable to be absent. You look surprized, Mr. Jessamy,” continued he, perceiving my father did so; “but I can easily convince you of the truth of what I say. I came now from visiting a lady, who, till within this month, or thereabouts, has not been at church for near seven years; though, before that time, nobody more constantly attended: and yet I firmly believe that there is not a better and more pious woman in the world.”

‘These last words were far from lessening the astonishment my father had been in from the beginning of this discourse; but he would not interrupt the doctor; who went on thus.

‘To ease you of that suspense which, I find, I have raised in you,” said he, “know, Mr. Jessamy, that this excellent lady flew not from divine service to pursue the pleasures of the town, nor to gratify any sensual inclination of her own; but to shut herself up in a close room with an aged parent, who, pressed beneath

“the

“ the weight of years and infirmities,
 “ unable to go out herself, and equally
 “ unwilling to receive any visits from
 “ those who knew her in a more sanguine state, had no consolation but
 “ in the dutiful cares of this beloved
 “ daughter, who was continually employed about her, administering every
 “ thing in her power for her relief.”—
 “ It is impossible for me,” said Jenny, pursuing the thread of her discourse, “ to remember half the encomiums he
 “ made on this act of filial piety : but
 “ this I know, that I have ever since
 “ been fully convinced, that, while we
 “ are here upon earth, all the prayers
 “ we can make to Heaven will be insufficient to atone for neglecting to
 “ discharge, as well as is in our power,
 “ the duties of our several stations.”

Jemmy was now about to tell her how much his opinion, in this point, coincided with what she had delivered; but she happened to be in a very talkative humour; and this being a subject which, in her serious moments, had frequently occurred to her, she would not quit it for the sake of hearing any praises given to herself.

“ There are some people,” resumed she, “ who are hypocrites without knowing themselves that they are so; they fast, they pray incessantly; they are abundant in giving to charitable uses, and do many other great and laudable actions; but then they do them not so much for the sake of the religion that enjoins us to do all the good we can, as for the sake of gratifying their own vanity in being able to perform more than their neighbours.”—“ This is ostentation,” cried Jemmy, interrupting her; “ and I am afraid that too many of those great actions, so hyperbolically extolled in panegyrick, if searched into the bottom, would be found to proceed from no other source.”—“ Ostentation,” answered she, “ is different from the propensity I mean. Ostentation, as I take it, is rather an ambition of appearing better in the eyes of others than we either are, or will take any pains to be, in fact: but what I am speaking of is an innate triumph of the heart; a mental exultation within ourselves in the imagination that we, in reality, excel other people; and this, I think, may be called a spiritual pride. I have heard such strange stories,” continued

Jenny, “ such unaccountable instances, in relation to this same spiritual pride among the nuns abroad, as I should have looked upon to have been mere inventions to depreciate and ridicule that way of worship, if they had not been solemnly averred to me by a lady who is herself a Roman Catholic, was two years a pensioner in a monastery at Paris, and an eye-witness of the truth of what she said.”

Here she was preparing to repeat some of those particulars which the lady had made her acquainted with; but was prevented by a servant who came into the room to call her down to dinner: on which Jemmy, as she was a boarder, took his leave, probably with less reluctance if the subject they had been engaged in had happened to be one of a more entertaining nature. Nor will the reader find any reason to be greatly dissatisfied at the breaking off a conversation which could be little improving, as an excess of devotion is not among the reigning errors of the present times.

C H A P. XVII.

WILL IN ALL LIKELIHOOD APPEAR, TO THE GREATEST PART OF OUR READERS, A GOOD DEAL MORE INTERESTING THAN THE FORMER.

AFTER that conversation which had engrossed the whole of the preceding Chapter, a multiplicity of engagements, of one sort or other, so took up Jemmy's time, that he could not find one hour to visit his beloved and most-deserving mistress for three days successively; but on the evening of the latter, he found, on his coming home, a little billet from her, which had been left for him in the afternoon; the contents whereof were as follow.

“ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

“ DEAR JEMMY,
 “ A Proposal has been made to me, which, before I accept of, I am desirous to acquaint you with. If this is so fortunate as to find you at home, shall be glad of seeing you this evening; if not, expect you will not fail of calling on me in the morning
 “ as

‘as early as you can; because I have
‘promised to give my final answer some
‘time to-morrow. I am, with all sin-
‘cerity, dear Jemmy, yours, &c. &c.

‘J. JESSAMY.’

On the first mention of this billet, after an absence of so unusual a length between these two lovers, when in the same town together, I dare believe that many of my female readers expect to find it filled either with reproaches or complaints; or, perhaps, with a mixture of both; but Jenny was of a different complexion from the generality of her sex; she could love without anxiety, and, glad as she was whenever she saw the object of her passion, was never angry or unhappy when she saw him not. If all women could bring themselves to behave in the manner Jenny did, I cannot but think they would find their account in it, not only in the tranquillity of their own minds, but also in rendering more permanent the affection of the man they loved: doubts, suspicions, and jealousies, though arising from a tender cause, frequently hurry the person possessed of them into such furious marks of resentment, as, if the lover has the least inclination to break off, gives him a fair pretence of doing so.

The guilty heart, which, perhaps, might be in time reclaimed by its own consciousness of being in the wrong, is often hardened by upbraidings; there is a certain pride and obstinacy in some natures which will not bear reproof, and makes them persist in the errors which themselves condemn, only because they are condemned by others. But if the man who knows he justly merits all the reproaches he can be loaded with, can so ill endure rebuke, how shall the innocent, the faithful lover, support it? To be accused of a crime his very apprehension shudders at, to be treated by the woman he adores with a sullen coldness, and with causeless testimonies of suspicion, must give him the most poignant inquietude: and though he may submit to it at first, and be even pleased, as imagining such a behaviour an indication of the most tender passion in his mistress; yet, when he finds all his endeavours to calm the tempest in her soul are fruitless, he will at last, especially if he is a man of sense and spi-

rit, be wearied out; as the poet truly says—

‘Small jealousies, indeed, enflame desire;
‘Too great not fan, but quite put out the fire.’

Or as another, in my opinion, more emphatically expresses his sense of the matter—

‘Tis just, when doubts without foundation
‘grow,
‘Those who believe us false should find us so.’

But I have seen too much how far the power of jealousy, a passion truly called the poison of love, operates on a female mind, not to be sensible, that all the advice I can give on this occasion will be entirely thrown away; and that I have more reason to ask pardon of my fair readers for this digression, than to flatter myself they will be any way profited by it. To return to the business of my history: it was too late when Jemmy received the above-mentioned summons from his mistress to attend her that night, but he complied with it very early the next morning, according to her request; and, indeed, much sooner than she could reasonably have expected he would have been stirring. He found her encompassed with trunks and band-boxes, and very busy in packing up her apparel: ‘You have found me preparing for a journey,’ cried she; ‘which, notwithstanding, I would neither resolve upon, nor promise to take, without receiving your approbation of it.’—‘You surprize me!’ said he: ‘a journey! and wait for my approbation of it!’—‘Yes,’ replied she; ‘it was to that end I sent for you in such a hurry: but sit down, and I will tell you all.’ Jemmy then took a chair; and, she placing herself in another opposite to him, began as follows.

‘You must know,’ said she, ‘that I dined yesterday, by invitation, at Lady Speck’s; her sister, Mrs. Wingman, was with her; they are both going to Bath to-morrow, and were very urgent with me to accompany them. As I never saw that place, and have heard so much of it, I must confess I should be well enough pleased to go with them thither; especially when I have the opportunity of being escorted by three or four stout fellows with
‘fire-

‘fire-arms, by way of defence from the gentlemen-collectors on the road.’—‘I know,’ replied Jemmy, ‘that Lady Speck will abate nothing that she thinks becoming her quality, and always travels in a genteel manner. And so you set out to-morrow?’—‘I do not tell you I shall set out at all,’ answered she; ‘for I am not yet determined.’ Jemmy then asked her on what motive she hesitated. ‘Can you not guess?’ cried she, looking kindly on him. ‘No, upon my honour!’ said he. ‘Then you are not so just to me as you ought to be,’ returned she gravely: ‘you might have thought I would agree to nothing of this nature, without having first consulted you.’

‘Me!’ cried Jemmy; ‘did you not tell me you should like to go?’—‘Yes,’ replied she; ‘but, as I suppose, according to the footing on which we now stand, that it will be my duty hereafter to submit my inclinations to the regulation of your will, I thought it proper to give you a previous sample how easy it will be for me to do so. In fine, my dear Jemmy, I will not go without your consent; nor even without your approbation.’

‘This is indeed a proof of tenderness,’ cried he, ‘which I could not expect, nor can any way deserve, unless it be by joining my entreaties with the ladies, that you will not refuse their request.’ In speaking these words he rose from his seat, and snatched her to his arms with an infinity of transport and affection. ‘Then you are willing,’ said she, returning him his embrace, ‘to part with me for the long space of six or seven weeks at least; for they do not purpose to return sooner.’

‘I will not pretend to be so much the matter of myself,’ said he, still holding her by the hand, ‘as to be perfectly content during such a separation as you have mentioned; but I can see no reason to put my patience to so severe a trial; I might follow you directly, but it happens unluckily that my steward, whom I have sent for, comes to town to-morrow, and the affairs I have to settle with him will detain me for some days: but I believe I may flatter myself with seeing my dear Jenny at Bath within a fortnight at the very farthest.’—‘May I then expect you?’ cried she, with a

voice which expressed the utmost satisfaction. ‘You may not only expect,’ but depend upon my coming,’ answered he: ‘you have the greatest security for it that is in nature, which is that of my own inclination. Believe me, my dear Jenny, that I never was easy when absent from you for any length of time; the thoughts of you still mingled with all the little sports and recreations of my childhood; and now, when riper years have made me more truly sensible of the perfections you are mistress of, I feel it would be an utter impossibility to live without seeing you.’

She answered these fond expressions with others no less endearing; after which she told him, that, since he agreed to her going, and had promised to follow, she would send immediately, and let Lady Speck know she should be ready to attend her ladyship next morning. Jemmy then left her to do as she had said, and went home to dress; but returned in the evening, and staid supper with her, when nothing passed of consequence enough to trouble the reader with, except his renewing the assurances he before had given her of seeing her at Bath as soon as his business was dispatched.

C H A P. XVIII.

CONTAINS A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF JENNY'S JOURNEY TO BATH; AND ALSO SOME PASSAGES WHICH HAPPENED ON HER ARRIVAL THERE.

JENNY thought she had all the reason imaginable to be pleased with this excursion, not only in the gratification of her curiosity in the sight of a place she had heard so much of, but also in the society of the company she went with; of whose characters it is highly proper to give the reader some account.

Lady Speck had been the wife of a person of distinction, whom she lost in the first year of their marriage; but as love had not been in the least consulted by either party in the formation of that union, so grief had for his death little effect, either on the delicacy of her complexion, or the sprightliness of her humour: she had also some consolations which many widows want; for, besides

a very large jointure settled on her by her marriage-articles, she was now in possession of an estate of near two thousand pounds a year, by the demise of an uncle. The age of this lady did not exceed twenty-five; Miss Wingman, who was her sister by her mother's side, was six or seven years younger, and a great heiress; both of them had a great deal of wit and vivacity; but though they saw all the gay company in the town, and conversed freely, neither of them had been guilty of any thing that could call their conduct in question, or cast a blemish on their reputations. These ladies, to whose characters I should also have added that of their being very agreeable in their persons, could not fail of attracting a great number of admirers; and as their going to Bath was no secret, those who were most eager to prove the sincerity of their attachment, thought they could not do it in a better way than by following them.

But there were two who distinguished themselves from all the rest of their competitors, by a particular act of knight-errantry: these were Mr. Lovegrove and Lord Huntley; the one had for some time made his addresses to Lady Speck, and the other either was, or pretended to be, passionately devoted to her sister. These gentlemen, who were intimate friends, and the confidants of each other's passion, contrived a little plot of love and gallantry between them, the idea of which gave them as much pleasure as they doubted not but their mistresses would receive in the execution of it. Having taken care to inform themselves as exactly as possible of the time in which the ladies were to set out, they left London some hours sooner, and arrived at Maidenhead early enough to accomplish what they had projected. They put up at the first great inn in the town; and, having given orders for a very elegant dinner to be prepared, posted themselves in a room that looked towards the road, that they might be ready to intercept the ladies, in case they should not intend to bait at this place.

This precaution was necessary, for Lady Speck's Jehu was driving furiously on, as they generally do when passing through any town or village where they have not orders to stop. The gentlemen saw them at a distance, and immediately sallied out. Lord Huntley's

two servants laid hold of the bridles of the fore-horses, and one of Mr. Lovegrove's with an authoritative voice called to the coachman to draw back the reins; their principals, at the same time, advanced at the coach door, and accosted these within it in these terms: 'We arrest you, ladies, in the name of Love,' said Lord Huntley; 'that god, so universally obeyed, has commissioned us, his faithful votaries, to stop your farther progress without his special leave.'—'Ceres and Bacchus are two of the party,' added Mr. Lovegrove; 'and it would be in vain for you to think of resisting their united influence.'

That momentary surprize which the ladies were in at the first stoppage of their coach, vanished on the sight of the persons who had occasioned it; and Lady Speck, who happened to sit on that side where they were, answered with a great deal of spirit—'We have nothing to do with the mischievous little deity; but as to Ceres and Bacchus, they are beneficent powers, and I think we ought to shew them some complaisance.—What say you, ladies?' continued she, turning to her sister and Miss Jessamy; the latter of whom being wholly unacquainted with the gentlemen, made no reply, nor indeed had she time; for Miss Wingman presently took up the word, and said—'Nay, sister, I think we have no choice to make; we are taken prisoners, and must submit to the laws of the conquerors.'

The coach-door was then opened, the ladies were handed out, and conducted into a room, where they found the table-cloth laid, and side-board set forth with as much elegance and propriety as if they had been in their own houses; but as they came somewhat sooner than the gentlemen expected, Mr. Lovegrove left Lord Huntley to entertain them for a moment, while he went down to give orders for hastening dinner. As he was returning from this little expedition, a post-chaise, attended by one servant, came galloping into the yard of the inn; the person who alighted from it was Sir Robert Manley, a very great acquaintance of Mr. Lovegrove's; they immediately saw each other, and mutually advanced with open arms. On putting the question to each other concerning the rout they were pursuing, Love-

grove related, in a few words, the method Lord Huntley and himself had taken to ingratiate themselves into the favour of their mistresses.

'You are happy fellows,' said Sir Robert, smiling. 'I am for Bath too; but you see how forlorn and solitary my journey will be in comparison of yours, who carry along with you those pleasures I am obliged to go in search of.' Mr. Lovegrove then told him, there was a third lady in company, 'Who, young and handsome as she is,' said he, 'is like to have but a dull time of it, as my lord and I have our particular attachments; therefore, if I could prevail on you to join us, we should be all right, and more at liberty to indulge our several inclinations.'—'I understand you,' replied the baronet; 'and was never backward in my life to come to the relief of a distressed fair-one. I shall find something or other to say to her, while you are entertaining your mistresses.' On this the other proposed that he should prosecute his journey with them in Lord Huntley's landau; to which he also agreeing, discharged in the same instant the post-chaise that had brought him thither, and they went up stairs together to join the company.

'I have staid a long time,' said Mr. Lovegrove, presenting Sir Robert; 'but I have brought my excuse in my hand.' This gentleman was particularly known to Lord Huntley, and no stranger to Lady Speck and her sister, and was received by them with all imaginable demonstrations of satisfaction; but Jenny, not having the least personal acquaintance with him, said no more than what bare civility demanded from her to a man of his rank and character. The conversation, during the time of dinner, becoming extremely gay and spirited, our young heroine bore a part in it with so much wit and vivacity, which, added to her other charms, could not fail of captivating almost any heart not already strongly prepossessed in favour of another object; his lordship and Mr. Lovegrove were defended, not only by the ideas, but also by the presence, of their mistresses; but what the heart of Sir Robert Manley felt on the sudden rush of such united perfections will very shortly be discovered.

It would be quite needless to tell the

reader that the table was elegantly served, for no one can suppose that gentlemen who had taken so much pains to acquire an opportunity of entertaining their mistresses, would omit any thing for that purpose which the place they were in was capable of furnishing. The same spirit of gallantry continued during the whole journey: wherever they halted, which was as often as any agreeable prospect invited, the ladies had nothing to pay, either for themselves, their servants, or their horses. As they travelled very leisurely, they found, on their arrival at Bath, their women attendants, who had come down with their luggage in the stage-coach, had been there some hours before them, and prepared every thing necessary for their reception at the lodgings which Lady Speck had previously taken care to secure.

It being towards evening when they came into the town, the gentlemen, after seeing their fair companions safe into their apartments, withdrew, on pretence of leaving them to take that repose which the delicacy of their constitutions might require; but, in reality, to go about the execution of a project they had all three been concerting on the road, and which they imagined would give the ladies a second surprize, no less agreeable than the former. They had been told there were a company of players, and a tolerable good band of musick, at that time in town; and as these people were to be employed for what they had designed, they went directly to the theatre, and hired such as they found most fit for their purpose; which was no other than to compliment the ladies, on their arrival, in a manner altogether new and unexpected.

Lord Huntley, who was a native of the kingdom of Ireland, had brought over with him a little musical interlude, which had been exhibited at a marriage-feast where his lordship had been a guest. As they were upon the subject of gallantry, he proposed to Mr. Lovegrove to entertain the ladies with this piece, by way of giving them their welcome to Bath, in case they should be able to procure people to perform the parts. The personages which composed the drama, were Love, Honour, and Pleasure. Mr. Lovegrove was charmed with the thought; and Sir Robert Manley

Manley said, that nothing could be more suitably adapted to the design they were at present upon.

The play-house, as I have already said, supplied them with performers better than they could even have hoped for in that place: a flaxen-haired boy, with sparkling eyes, cheeks which imitated the new-blown rose, and an admirable voice, was chosen to represent the God of Soft Desires. A man of a most graceful aspect, and who had great skill in music, was to appear in the character of Honour. A very beautiful young woman, and who also sung well, was to assume the name of Pleasure; and seemed, by her looks and manner, to be capable of giving a very just idea of the character she bore.

These people, properly habited and equipped for the several parts they were to act, and attended by musicians with various kinds of instruments, were all placed in a close arbour, at the farther end of the garden belonging to the house where the ladies lodged; the mistress of which Lord Huntley had acquainted with the design of surprizing the ladies with a morning's entertainment, and conducted them in through a back-door with secrecy, according to the directions given her by his lordship. Every thing being thus prepared, a servant was dispatched to the ladies, with the compliments of Lord Huntley, Mr. Lovegrove, and Sir Robert Manley; and entreating permission to wait on them, which being granted, they all immediately went; the latter of these gentlemen having, perhaps, as strong an attachment to be of the party as either of the former.

Scarcely were the first salutations over when the concert began with an overture of wind and string instruments, accompanied with an harpsichord: the ladies started.—'Bless me!' cried one, 'what is this?'—'Music,' cried another; 'and so near us! where can it come from?'—'The sounds,' said Mr. Lovegrove, 'seem to me to proceed from behind the house.'—'Certainly it is so,' rejoined Lord Huntley. 'I fancy, ladies, you will hear it more distinctly in the next room.' In speaking these words, without staying for permission to do so, he threw open the folding-doors, and they all ran in. But how prodigiously were the fair audience surprized, when, on drawing

up the curtains, they saw the garden planted on each side with musicians, who all, at the sight of them, bowed with the most profound reverence almost to the earth, in token that it was to them their present labours were devoted.

'What can this mean?' said Lady Speck. 'Here are those coming,' replied Mr. Lovegrove, 'who I believe will explain the mystery.' There was time for no more on either side; Honour rushed forth from his leafy covert, conducting little Cupid by the hand, and both advanced together to the middle of the alley; where, after making their obeisance to the windows, they began a duet, expressing the advantages each of them received by the fellowship of the other. Love confessed that his darts carried gall instead of honey into the heart they reached, when not under the direction of Honour; and Honour acknowledged, he never appeared so truly amiable as when accompanied by Love. They had no sooner ceased than Pleasure came tripping out, and told them, in a cantata, whenever the two were united, she must necessarily follow with all the sweets of Nature. They made her suitable answers in recitativo. After which the whole was concluded with a grand chorus.

This entertainment had all the effect that could be wished for by the contrivers of it: Jenny was charmed with the elegance of the design; Miss Wingman with the words; and Lady Speck with the music; in fine, they all seemed to vie with each other in giving the greatest praises to it. While they were thus expressing their satisfaction, the gentlemen put their heads out of the window; and Lord Huntley, in the name of the rest, said to the actors—'We shall see you this evening at the theatre, and make our acknowledgments for the trouble we have given you: in the mean time, you may carry with you the glory of knowing your performance has been approved of by the finest ladies in the world.'

On this the players, after making a low bow to the company, retired, and were conducted out of the garden, by the gentlewoman of the house, through the same gate by which they had entered. A piece of gallantry, so flattering to the vanity of the young and gay, could not but receive from Lady Speck and her sister all the retributions it demand-

ed from them; and Jenny, though far from thinking herself a party interested in it, said a thousand fine things in it's praise.

Charmed as the lovers were with the gracious acceptance their mistresses vouchsafed to what they had done, their politeness reminded them that they had already transgressed the usual boundaries of a morning's visit; therefore they took leave till a more convenient hour of the day should permit them to return.

CHAP. XIX.

TREATS OF MANY THINGS, WHICH, THOUGH THEY MAY SEEM AT PRESENT LESS AFFECTING THAN SOME OTHERS, YET ARE VERY NECESSARY FOR THE READER TO BE ACQUAINTED WITH BEFORE WE PROCEED FARTHER INTO THE HISTORY.

YOUTH, beauty, and wit, have deservedly a very powerful influence over the human heart; and every day's experience obliges us to own, that wealth, without the aid of any of these, is of itself sufficient to captivate; it supplies all other defects; it smooths the wrinkles of fourscore; it shapes deformity into comeliness, and gives graces to idiotism itself; as it is said by the inimitable Shakespeare—

- ‘Gold! yellow, glittering, precious gold!
- ‘Gold! that will make black white; foul
- ‘fair; wrong right;
- ‘Base noble; old young; cowards valiant!’

But when the gifts of nature are joined with those of fortune, how strong is the attraction! How irresistible is the force of such united charms! According to the words of the humorous poet—

- ‘Hence ’tis, no lover has the power
- ‘T’ enforce a desperate amour;
- ‘As he that has two strings to s bow,
- ‘And burns for love and money too.’

We ought not therefore, methinks, to judge with too much severity on the vanity of a fine lady; who seeing herself perpetually surrounded with a crowd of lovers, each endeavouring to excel

all his rivals in the most extravagant demonstrations of affection, can hardly believe she deserves not some part, at least, of the admiration she receives. But what pretence soever we may make to excuse the weakness of exulting in a multiplicity of lovers, it is still a weakness which all imaginable care ought to be taken to subdue; as it may draw on the most fatal consequences both on the admirers and admired. What duels have been fought, what torrents of blood have been shed, in the mad-brained fury of jealous rivalry! And how often have we seen the idol-fair herself, who lately triumphed in the pains she gave, neglected in her turn! deserted and abandoned to the last despair!

But this is only for such whom it may concern; the ladies I am at present speaking of were of a different stamp. Lady Speck had something of a pretty particular nature, both in her humour and her character, as the reader will hereafter be informed: in the meantime, he must content himself with a small sketch of both.

She liked a freedom of conversation with the men, but then she liked that conversation should be general; she took neither pride nor pleasure in the particular devoirs of those who professed themselves her lovers; and the encouragement she gave to the addresses of Lovegrove and others, was not the effect of any coquetry in her disposition, but was occasioned merely by her policy, as she thought such a behaviour would be the best means to conceal a secret inclination she had entertained in favour of one; which inclination many reasons forbade her to make known, or even to be guessed at.

Miss Wingman was of a humour so very volatile, that it was quite out of her power to think seriously for a minute together on any one thing whatever; and love the least of all took up her attention. Always pleased, always happy, she neither plumed herself on the new conquests she acquired, nor regretted the loss of those slaves who, weary of their bondage, shook off her chains. As for the heroine of this history, her early engagement with Jemmy was so well known, that it had hitherto defended her from all attacks, either to put her constancy to the trial, or shew the world in what manner she would

would behave amidst a plurality of lovers.

But now the time was come in which this young lady was to give most substantial proofs, not only of her affection and fidelity to the man whom she looked upon ordained to be her husband, but also of her generosity and gratitude to those for whose passion she had it not either in her power or inclination to make an adequate return. As all the arts of love and wit were put in practice by Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove, in the court they made to their respective mistresses, Sir Robert Manley thought it would ill become a man of his years and character to let a fine lady sit neglected by, especially one so deserving as Jenny was of all that could be said in her praise.

But though the compliments he entertained her with had at first no other foundation than mere gallantry, yet the manner in which she received them, and the answers she gave, were such as would have rendered it impossible for him to have withstood the charms of her tongue, even had he been unsusceptible to those of her eyes. In fine, none of the perfections she was endowed with were lost upon him; he soon found the full effects of a passion he had been only sporting with; and might say, with Cowley—

‘Unhurt, untouched, did I complain,
And terrify’d all others with my pain;
But now I feel the mighty evil,
Ah, there’s no fooling with the devil!
In things where fancy much does reign,
’Tis dangerous too cunningly to feign;
The play at last a truth does grow,
And custom into nature go.’

Love, though it may be counterfeited so as not to be, without great penetration, discovered to be false, cannot, wherever it is sincere, be wholly concealed. Sir Robert’s two friends perceived the change in him before he was quite assured of it himself: they were a little pleasant with him on the occasion; but, at the same time, acknowledged that the beauty and merit of Miss Jenny Jessamy demanded all the respect that could be paid. Sir Robert, on this, readily confessed that he had never seen a young lady whose person and accomplishments gave a more fair prospect of making compleatly happy the man who should possess her: ‘But,’

said he, ‘I have been told somewhat of an engagement she is under; and should be sorry to appear either unjust in attempting to invade the property of another, or so weak as to give up my heart entirely, without a possibility of having it well received.’

Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove were neither of them ignorant of what he meant: but the former having heard, in casual conversation, some of those whispers which the artifices of Bell-pine had circulated through almost all companies, cried hastily out—‘If a match between Miss Jenny and a young heir of her own name be the sole impediment to your making your addresses to her, I believe I may venture to assure you, from very good hands, that it is quite broke off; and that, for some time, they have neither regarded nor treated each other with any thing more than a bare civility.’—‘Your lordship’s intelligence,’ said Mr. Lovegrove, ‘seems to me agreeable to reason on the nature of the thing. The marriage was agreed upon by their parents before the young people were capable of judging for themselves; and, as now they are arrived at years of maturity, I see no cause, except a disinclination on the one side or the other, for delaying the consummation of what was so long ago projected.’

People easily believe what they wish; and, indeed, there was so much appearance of reason in the inference Mr. Lovegrove had drawn, that it is not to be wondered at that the young baronet readily gave into it. But he was still better satisfied, when, after having declared how happy he should think himself in an assurance of Jenny’s heart being disengaged, Mr. Lovegrove told him, that, since he found he was so serious in the affair, he would speak to Lady Speck, and endeavour to come at the certainty.

‘And I,’ cried Lord Huntley, ‘will find Miss Wingman on the occasion: I believe she will make no scruple to inform what she knows of it; and, as she is nearer to her own years than her sister, may be supposed to be yet deeper in her secrets and confidants.’ It would be superfluous to repeat the many retributions Sir Robert made to the gentlemen on the friendly part they took in his interest;

so I shall only say they were such as became the mouth of a man very much in love, and who scorned to make use of any dishonourable or ungenerous means for the attainment of his wishes.

CHAP. XX.

IS TAKEN UP WITH A CONVERSATION OF VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE.

NEITHER Lady Speck nor her sister were ignorant of those reports which had been so maliciously spread concerning a change in the sentiments of Jemmy; they had heard it averred, by several of their acquaintances, as a thing past all dispute: but, as their fair friend had never made them the confidants of her imaginary misfortune, they thought it too tender and delicate a point to be touched upon in her presence, and had always carefully avoided giving her the least hint that they had been told of such a thing. It was owing, however, merely to the esteem and friendship they had towards her, that had induced them to persuade her to accompany them to Bath, believing that the pleasures of that place might keep her from resenting, too deeply, an indignity which few women are able to support with patience.

Regarding her in the affectionate manner they did, it could not but afford them a deal of satisfaction to be informed by Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove of the new conquest he had made; judging, as they reasonably might, that the offer of a heart, such as that of Sir Robert Manley, would fully compensate for the loss they supposed she had sustained by the infidelity of Jemmy. Both these ladies assured not only their lovers, but Sir Robert himself, of the part they took in his interest; and that they would lay hold of the first opportunity to speak to Jenny on the affair, in such terms as should seem to them most effectual to convince her that she ought not to slight a proposal which could not but prove for her honour and advantage to accept.

They were punctual to their promise. The next morning, as they were sitting all together at breakfast, Lady Speck introduced what she intended to insinuate, by making some observations on

the temper and behaviour of mankind in general; till, by degrees, she fell insensibly, as it were, and without seeming to have any design, into very great commendations of Sir Robert Manley; saying, that she thought that he had more virtue, and fewer faults, than most men of her acquaintance; and then asked Jenny what was her opinion of him. 'Really, Madam,' replied she, 'I pretend to very little judgment of mankind, especially in those I have known so short a time; but, by what I have seen of Sir Robert, he appears to me to have honour and good-sense, and also to be well natured.'

'You have named,' said Lady Speck, 'the three grand requisites for making a good husband; and I hope that the object of his affections will soon be convinced that he is possessed of them, as well as with an infinity of love.'—'Is Sir Robert, then, about marrying?' demanded Jenny. 'I cannot say absolutely about it,' returned Lady Speck; 'for I am pretty certain he has not yet assumed courage enough to make any declaration of his passion: all I know is, that he is most violently in love.'—'He is undoubtedly a very fine gentleman,' said Jenny; 'and, if his passion be sincere and honourable, he shall have my good wishes for his success.'—'As to his success,' resumed her ladyship, 'it depends entirely on yourself; for, I assure you, it is with you he is in love.'—'With me, Madam!' cried Jenny, very much astonished, and setting down her dish of tea. 'What does your ladyship mean?'—'I mean as I have said,' replied the other: 'but, if you have a mind the intelligence should be repeated, I will oblige you so far as to assure you that it is with your individual self Sir Robert Manley is in love!'

'I perceive,' said Jenny, 'your ladyship is pleased to divert yourself this morning at my expence.'—'No! I protest,' returned Lady Speck, 'I was never more in earnest in my whole life.'—'Indeed,' rejoined Miss Wingman, 'I can vouch for my sister's sincerity in this point. Sir Robert has made Mr. Lovegrove and Lord Huntley the confidants of his passion; and, I believe, you will very soon hear it from his own mouth.'—'I hope not,' answered Jenny, in a very reserved tone; 'for if Sir Robert has, in reality, such inclinations

‘inclinations towards me as you mention, he should, at least, have the prudence to keep them to himself, as he cannot but know my hand has long been destined to another.’ — ‘Say, rather,’ cried Lady Speck, ‘intended to be given; for it is not in the power of parents to make their children’s fate: they often decree for us what we do not think fit to comply with even while they live to awe us into obedience by their frowns; but when they are dead, and we are left to the management of ourselves, we children pay not much regard to the injunctions of those who are no longer in a condition to thwart our inclinations.’

‘That may be the case sometimes,’ said Jenny; ‘but I should be sorry to be among the number of those who verify it. Our parents have not only an undoubted right to dispose of us, but also are much better judges of what will make our happiness than ourselves can pretend to be.’ — ‘All this is very true,’ cried Miss Wingman, very briskly: ‘but how much soever those who would pass for the discreet part of our sex, may pique themselves upon their implicit obedience in this point, I believe the men will not be found altogether so sanguine in the performance of their duty.’ — ‘No, no!’ replied Lady Speck; ‘inclination does all on their part. It is not virtue, it is not wit, it is not beauty, it is not all the perfections that Heaven and Nature can bestow, but fancy, partial fancy, by which the heart of man is influenced; and that woman who preserves her affection for a lover, who either never did, or having once done so, ceases to regard her as he ought, discovers a meanness of spirit which must render her contemptible both in his eyes and those of all her acquaintance.’

Jenny, whose penetration few things escaped, presently comprehended that this discourse was aimed to raise some suspicions in her mind concerning the constancy of Jemmy; and, looking on such an attempt as highly injurious both to herself and him, answered, with somewhat of what the French call a *fierté* in her voice and countenance, in these terms: ‘The more ridiculous it

appears,’ said she, ‘the more reason have Mr. Jessamy and myself to thank Heaven for directing the care of our indulgent fathers to cast our lot where there is no danger of such a misfortune happening to either of us.’

Lady Speck and Miss Wingman looked on each other with some amazement while Jenny was speaking, as not well knowing what to think; but, after a pause of some minutes — ‘Some people,’ said Lady Speck, a little scornfully, ‘take a pride in being blind to what half the town has long since seen and laughed at.’ Here she stopped; and Miss Wingman, who was the more spirited of the two, and a good deal nettled at the tart manner in which Jenny had spoke, cried out — ‘Dear sister, I beg you will shew Miss Jessamy the letter your ladyship received since our coming down to Bath: it is the duty of her friends to force open her eyes, as she seems obstinate to shut day-light out.’

‘It is a thing I have been very loth to mention,’ resumed Lady Speck; ‘and I now do it with an extreme reluctance: but, since there is no other way to convince you that the world is not so ignorant as you imagine of the inconstancy and perfidiousness of Mr. Jessamy, read that; and cease, for the future, to offer any thing in the vindication of so unworthy a man.’ In speaking these words, she took a letter out of her pocket, and put it into Jenny’s hand; which that young lady opening, with an agitation of spirits very unusual with her, found it contained as follows.

‘TO THE HONOURABLE LADY
SPECK, AT BATH.

‘MADAM,

‘AS I know very well that minds truly benignant and humane, like your ladyship’s, take a pleasure in every opportunity of doing good, I shall make no apology for the trouble of this anonymous epistle; especially as it is wrote with a view of serving a young lady who so well deserves, and possesses, so much of your ladyship’s kind wishes as Miss Jessamy.

‘But, not to keep your ladyship
H longer

‘ longer in suspense, permit me to acquaint you, that Mr. Jessamy, who for some time has made his private addresses to Miss Chit, has now taken the opportunity of your fair friend’s absence to avow publickly his passion for that young person. Some people will have it, that every thing is already so far concluded upon between them, that a marriage will very shortly be consummated; but this I will not pretend to affirm: it is certain, however, that he loves her; and that a little skill in musick out-balances, in his giddy fancy, all the real merits of the beautiful and accomplished Miss Jessamy.

‘ I know not whether she is as yet apprized of his infidelity, or has even any suspicions of it; but the less she is so, the more will it shock her tender nature to find, at her return, that he is married, or about being married, to another. How could her gentle heart support the sudden disappointment! How bear the double pangs of the indignity offered to her love and beauty! Fatal, alas! might be the consequences of such a stroke, if not previously prepared and armed against it!

‘ It depends greatly on your ladyship to shield that injured innocence from being too deeply affected with her misfortune; and, as her case must touch every one who has a soul capable of social commiseration, I take the liberty, with all submission, to entreat you, Madam, to give her such warnings of her fate as may render the certainty, whenever it shall arrive, less heavy to be borne. If once thoroughly persuaded there is a probability of his being false, it will at least take off the alarming surprize of finding he is so: and the more early she is brought to suspect his baseness, the more opportunity she will have to exert the good sense she is mistress of in desisting, instead of lamenting it.

‘ The manner in which this is most proper to be done will best be determined by your ladyship’s superior judgment. I only beg that the above hints may be received, in an assurance that they proceed from a heart truly devoted to honour and virtue, and

‘ entirely free from all views but such as may be conducive to promote the cause of those noble principles. I am, with a profound respect, Madam, your ladyship’s most humble, most faithful, and obedient servant.

‘ P. S. Your ladyship will pardon the concealment of my name for the present, as an advice of this nature might probably subject the person who gives it to many great inconveniences, if known before the affair to which it relates is absolutely concluded, and past beyond all possibility of denial.’

Scarce had Jenny patience to go through with this invidious scroll. ‘ Good God!’ cried she to Lady Speck, ‘ who is it can have the baseness to assert such monstrous untruths, or the presumption to attempt making your ladyship’s good-nature the dupe of a design so villainous, and withal so mean?’

Then immediately recollecting what had just now been told her concerning the passion Sir Robert Manley had entertained for her, she hesitated not a moment to accuse him of having taken this method to alienate her affections from Jemmy; and, looking on the contrivance with that contempt and indignation it really deserved, began to reproach him in terms the most bitter that could issue from a mouth so little accustomed to invectives. The two ladies seemed quite astonished at her behaviour; and both joined to endeavour to convince her of the injustice to Sir Robert, who, they believed, had too much honour to attempt the gaining of his point by a way so abject and so unworthy of his character: and, to clear his innocence, assured her that they had heard an account of Jemmy’s infidelity, from many hands, before they left London, or that Sir Robert had ever seen her face. All they could say, however, was insufficient to make Jenny recede from her opinion: the dispute grew pretty warm; and would probably have run to greater lengths, if it had not been seasonably interrupted by some company coming to visit them.

C H A P. XXI.

GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF SOME PASSAGES, WHICH, ADDED TO THE FORMER, AFFORD OUR HEROINE MUCH MATTER OF DISCONTENT.

JENNY had been so much discomposed and ruffled at the discourse of the ladies, and the letter shewn to her by them, that neither her natural sprightliness and gaiety, nor all the efforts her reason made, were sufficient to re-settle in her mind that happy serenity she enjoyed before. She had not the least tincture of jealousy in her composition; she had always depended on the sincerity of Jemmy, and, as yet, was far from believing that he could be false: but it vexed her to be told that others thought him so; that he passed, in the eyes of the world, for an inconstant and ungrateful man; and, what was still more insupportable, that herself was looked upon as a slighted and forsaken mistress. Pity is so near akin to contempt, that few women of spirit can bear it: even those who have the least share of vanity, I believe, would rather chuse to be envied and hated for having too much the power of pleasing, than commiserated for their want of it. The affection she had for Jemmy was not of that fond and foolish nature as to make her wish to be forever in his sight: she had been absent from him more weeks than she had now been days, without the least repining or inquietude; but, on hearing this story, she could not keep herself from being excessively impatient for his coming down to Bath; not that she desired his presence to clear any doubts of her own, but that his behaviour might convince the company she was with of their mistake as to his fidelity.

The promise he had made of following her when she left London, and which had since been confirmed by two several letters she had received from him, made her expect his arrival would be very soon; and she was pleasing herself with the thoughts how that event would make Lady Speck and Miss Wingman ashamed of having too rashly given credit to a calumny, which she doubted not but they would then see had not the

least foundation. But this was a satisfaction which vanished in a very short space of time: a few hours made her know that she must wait much longer than she had imagined for the completion of what at present her pride made her so ardently desire.

The evening of that very same day, whose morning had occasioned in her breast these various perturbations, presented her with something which was far from lulling them to rest. Just as she was going to the assembly-room with the ladies, and some other company, the post brought a letter; the contents whereof were these.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY, AT BATH.

‘ DEAR JENNY,

‘ I Am in so ill a humour, that, I believe, it would be utterly out of my power to write to any one person in the world except yourself; and yet it is almost entirely on your account that I am thus disconcerted. This you may think a paradox; but I shall soon explain the riddle.

‘ For three whole days successively I have been every hour expecting the arrival of my steward; but last night, instead of himself, I received a letter from him, acquainting me that, having been obliged to make a seizure on one of my tenant’s effects, that affair would of necessity detain him at least seven or eight days longer. Judge how severely this accident has mortified me, as it deprives me so much longer than I hoped of the pleasures of Bath; and, what is infinitely more valuable to me, the sight of my dear Jenny! Console me as often as you can with your letters; it is in them alone I can take any true satisfaction during this enforced absence. Farewell! I flatter myself there is no need of fresh assurances to convince you that I am, with the warmest affection, my dear Jenny’s most devoted and obedient servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. My friend Bellpine, who is now with me, desires you will accept his compliments and best wishes. We are just going together to hear a fine piece of
H 2 ‘ musick,

‘ musick, if my chagrin does not
 ‘ turn the notes into discord. Once
 ‘ more for this time, my dear
 ‘ Jenny, adieu!’

Jenny withdrew to a window to take just a cursory view of this epistle; for, being waited for by the company, she could not, without a breach of civility, give herself time to examine it with that strictness the present situation of her mind inclined her to do. She was, however, sufficiently mistress of the sense of it, to perceive she must not expect to see him at Bath so soon as she wished; and this delay, as my fair readers will easily believe, gave no small mortification both to her pride and love.

The assembly was more than ordinarily brilliant that night; but not all the diversions and gallantries of the place could dissipate the gloom that hung heavy on her spirits, and, as she was an ill dissembler, was but too visible in her countenance. It was not that in the slight perusal she had been able to give *Jemmy’s* letter she had found any thing to confirm the informations of *Lady Speck* and *Miss Wingman*; but the delay of his coming, at a time when she thought his presence so necessary to clear both his own and her reputation, that alone gave her these inquietudes; and the disappointment was more grievous, as it was the first she as yet had ever met with.

Not all her efforts could enable her to behave with her accustomed vivacity that night: she bore very little part in the conversation; was wholly unattentive to the musick, as well as the fine things said to her; and whenever she spoke, it was in such a manner as made it easy to perceive she would rather have chose to have remained silent. Conscious of this defect, and finding herself altogether unfit for company, she pretended a violent head-ache, and retired some hours before the usual time. On her coming home she shut herself up in her own apartment, and gave strict orders to her maid that no one should disturb her; then fell to examining, with the utmost exactness, every sentence of the letter which had created in her so much uneasiness. She compared it with the others she had received from him since her arrival at Bath, and found it nothing different either in the style or manner; till, coming to the post-

script, the mention he made of going to hear a fine piece of musick, she suddenly cried out—‘ That musick may
 ‘ perhaps be performed by *Miss Chit*:
 ‘ a story, such as I have been told, could
 ‘ not certainly be raised without some
 ‘ little truth for it’s foundation.’

But this fit of jealousy lasted scarce a moment. ‘ How unjust and foolish
 ‘ am I!’ said she: ‘ I know he loves
 ‘ musick; but what then? If being
 ‘ mistress of that accomplishment had
 ‘ given *Miss Chit*, or any other wo-
 ‘ man, the preference to me in his es-
 ‘ teem, he would have been entirely
 ‘ silent on the pleasure he was going to
 ‘ take: the guilty always carefully
 ‘ avoid speaking on the theme which
 ‘ calls their crime in question.’ In this favourable disposition she might have continued, if a thousand instances of the deceit and perfidy of men, in the affairs of love, which she had either heard or read of, had not immediately presented themselves to her remembrance, and reminded her that she ought not to be too secure; that the passion of love, like the wind, blew where it list-
 ‘ ed; and that the poet says—

‘ Man is but man, inconstant still, and va-
 ‘ rious;
 ‘ There’s no to-morrow in him like to-day:
 ‘ Perhaps the atoms rolling in his brain
 ‘ Make him think honestly this present hour;
 ‘ The next, a swarm of base, ungrateful
 ‘ thoughts,
 ‘ May mount aloft:
 ‘ Who would trust Chance, since all men have
 ‘ the seeds
 ‘ Of good or ill, which would work upwards
 ‘ first.’

Yet for all this she could not bring herself to believe him absolutely false: if one moment accused him in her thoughts, the next acquitted him; but what gave her the greatest perplexity of all was, the difficulty she found in guessing by whom or to what end this aspersion had first been raised, and how it came to be so spread.

She thought that neither *Jemmy* nor herself had done any thing to incur the malice of the world, so far as that even any one person should be desirous of rendering them unhappy. ‘ It cannot
 ‘ therefore be,’ cried she, ‘ but that
 ‘ some vile, self-interested view, must
 ‘ be the source of all this: nobody,
 ‘ sure, would be at the wicked pains

‘ to separate two persons whose hearts from their infancy have been united by the strictest bonds of love and friendship, merely for the sake of mischief; no, it is utterly impossible that human nature can be so depraved.’ This reflection leading her still farther on, she began to argue within her mind for what end a contrivance to part her and Jemmy could be formed; and found none so conformable to probability, as that the author of it aimed to be in the place of one or the other. As for her own part, the engagements between her and Jemmy were so well known, that no man had ever made his serious addresses to her; and if Sir Robert Manley had now any such intentions, the character of that gentleman would not permit her to believe he could be capable of making use of base means for the forwarding his wishes: besides, Lady Speck and Miss Wingman had assured her, in the most solemn manner, that they had heard the report before their coming down to Bath, or that he had ever seen her.

It rested, therefore, that it must be on the account of Jemmy that all this had happened: she knew very well that he conversed freely with the ladies; he had never made a secret to her of his doing so; and it seemed not in the least improbable, that some one among them might like him but too well. ‘ Perhaps,’ said she, ‘ Miss Chit herself, mistaking for love what he meant only as gallantry, might have the vanity to boast of having inspired him with a real passion. The smallest hint,’ continued she, ‘ that such a thing is, or possibly may be, passes with many people for an undoubted fact. And who knows but the whisper of Jemmy’s imaginary infidelity may have been carried from one to another, till it reached the ears of some person who, more compassionate than wife, wrote to Lady Speck in the manner I have seen?’

Thus did she endeavour to dive into the bottom of this mysterious affair, assigning for it every cause that reason or her fertile imagination could suggest; yet wavering still, and uncertain on which of them she should fix, her mind at length grew quite fatigued with the unavailing search; and she resolved to wait till time should bring to light what all her penetration could not at present

enable her to discover. In this manner was the sweetest and most serene temper in the world disconcerted and thrown off its bias, by the dark villainy of a man whom she had not the least suspicion of. She went to bed, however; and, for aught I ever heard to the contrary, slept as well as if nothing had happened to perplex her waking thoughts.

C H A P. XXII.

AFFORDS SOME VERY USEFUL AND EXEMPLARY HINTS TO YOUNG PERSONS OF BOTH SEXES; WHICH IF THEY ARE NOT THE BETTER AND WISER FOR, IT IS WHOLLY OWING TO THEMSELVES, AND NOT THE FAULT OF THE AUTHOR.

THAT only true composing draught, an unforced natural slumber, so effectually lulled the mind of Jenny, that, when she awoke the next morning, the anxieties of the preceding day were scarce remembered by her; or, if they were, it was but to wonder at herself for having yielded to their force. ‘ As I think,’ said she, ‘ that I may be pretty confident the story I was told yesterday has nothing of reality in it, but is a most vile and notorious falsehood; how silly was I to give myself any pain concerning either by whom or on what motive it was invented! There are some people,’ said she, ‘ who seem to be born with a propensity to mischief. I remember that, when I was at the boarding-school, a thousand little quarrels happened between the girls, which were occasioned merely by the lying insinuations of some among us, who took a wicked pleasure in giving pain to others. Too many in the world,’ continued she, ‘ when arrived at years of maturity, instead of endeavouring to correct, take pains to improve and cultivate this cruel disposition in themselves, till even it becomes a science; and the more vexation they create to those who are so unhappy to be of their acquaintance, the more proofs they imagine they give of their own ingenuity and fertility of invention.

‘ How stupid, then, is it,’ went she still

still on, 'to give ear to every idle tale!
' It is, joining with the adversaries of
' our peace; aiding those malicious ef-
' forts, and giving them a triumph
' over us, which otherwise all they
' could do would never be able to ob-
' tain. We certainly ought not to be-
' lieve ill of any one without the testi-
' mony of our own senses to confirm
' the truth of that report; but more
' especially it behoves us to reject with
' the utmost contempt whatever has a
' tendency to create a disagreement be-
' tween us and those we love.'

Thus did her good understanding and strength of reason enable her to get the better of all these doubts and jealous apprehensions, into which young persons of her sex are for the most part too liable to fall. She passed a good deal of time in this sort of conversation with herself; and would not, perhaps, have broke it off so soon, if she had not been interrupted by Lady Speck's woman, who came into the chamber to enquire after her health, and to let her know the ladies waited breakfast for her. She obeyed the summons immediately, and appeared so very sprightly, that Lady Speck and her sister had not the least room to imagine that the disorder she had complained of the night before had been occasioned by any thing they had said to her in relation to Jemmy. A succession of visitants, one after another, came in all that whole day, some of whom staid to accompany them to the Long-room; but Jenny, who had never failed to answer every letter she had received from Jemmy by the very first post, would not now be more remiss; and, excusing herself for a few minutes, retired to her chamber, and wrote to him in the following manner.

' TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

' MY DEAR JENNY,

' I Am very sensible that I am quite
' wrong to add to the vexation you
' express, by giving you any knowledge
' of mine; yet it is not in my power to
' forbear telling you, that this delay of
' your journey has involved me in dis-
' quiet altogether new to me; I know
' not how it is, that I never so much
' wished to see you as I now do.

' I should be sorry if you neglected

' any affairs of consequence on my ac-
' count; but be assured, however, till
' you come, all the amusements, all
' the pleasures, with which this place
' abounds, and I am continually sur-
' rounded, will lose their relish, and be
' insipid to me.

' Such a confession would seem ex-
' tremely awkward from the pen of a
' woman, were we not upon the terms
' we are, or had we been brought up in
' a different manner: but from my in-
' fancy I have been made to think it
' was my duty to conceal from you no
' part of my sentiments; and you have
' often told me, that the same prin-
' ciples were intilled in you. As I
' have the most perfect confidence that
' you are no less punctual in your obe-
' dience to this injunction than myself,
' I am not afraid or ashamed of giving
' you all the testimonies of my affection
' that honour and virtue will permit;
' and more, I am certain, you will
' never desire.

' I shall say nothing to urge you to
' as speedy a dispatch as possible of the
' business that detains you from me; I
' am too well acquainted with your
' sincerity to doubt if your heart is not
' already here, and shall therefore en-
' deavour to console myself till your
' arrival, with your letters, as you tell
' me you shall do with those you receive
' from me. I am, with an attachment
' which only yourself can break, my
' dear Jemmy, your most affectionate
' and ever-faithful

' J. JESSAMY.

' P. S. If I have expressed too much
' impatience in the above, excuse
' it on the account that, hitherto
' unaccustomed to disappoint-
' ments, I am the less able to su-
' stain them with that fortitude
' and resignation I ought to do.'

Having finished this little epistle, and given orders that it should be carried to the post-office, she returned to the company, who by this time were ready to adjourn to the assembly: she went with them; and few women there appeared to more advantage than herself. Sir Robert Manley, to whom neither Lady Speck nor Miss Wingman had related any part of the rebuff they had received from Jenny on his score, was very im-
patient

patient to make a declaration of his passion to her: but though he had seen her three times that day, at home, in the walks, and at the assembly, yet no opportunity proper for his purpose had presented itself.

He complained of his ill-luck to Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove, who, after consulting with the ladies what could be done for the advancement of the interest of their friend in this point, it was so contrived amongst them, that she should be left alone with him, as if by accident. But this could not be done with so much art as to elude the discernment of Jenny; she easily perceived with what intent first one and then another slipped out of the room, till none but Sir Robert and herself were left in it. She could not help smiling within herself to think that all this mighty pains was taken only to shew Sir Robert that he had nothing to hope for from her; and was not at all displeased with having it in her power to convince that gentleman, that the affection between herself and Jemmy was too strongly cemented to be shaken by the amorous attacks of any pretender whatsoever.

I am afraid that, on computation, the number of those ladies would be found but small, who, in this giddy and unthinking age, are not fond of making new conquests, though rendered, by even the most solemn engagements, utterly incapable of accepting the trophies presented them. Jenny, however, had nothing of this vanity in her composition; she had heard and read much of the effects of love, and the fatal consequences which had sometimes attended a disappointed flame; and therefore had always considered that passion as a thing of too serious a nature to be sported with; and that it was an action highly ungenerous and cruel to encourage the growth of it in any heart, without having the power or inclination of making an adequate return. Sir Robert Manley was a person whose addresses might have gratified the pride of any woman who placed her glory in seeing herself admired. Jenny was sensible of his merit; but the more she was so, the more she thought herself obliged to prevent him at once from indulging any fruitless expectations.

He had no sooner made her an offer of his heart, and was just beginning to

assure her how much, and how eternally, he was devoted to her, than she stopped the progress of his declaration, by asking him, with a very reserved air, if he were really in earnest? To which he answering in the affirmative, and annexing the most solemn protestation of the truth—‘Then, Sir,’ said she, ‘I am equally sorry and astonished, that a gentleman of so much good sense and honour in other things, should forget himself so far as to entertain any thoughts of this kind for a woman who, he cannot but have heard, has from her very birth been allotted for another.’

The manner in which these words were delivered giving a double energy to the meaning of them, had a prodigious effect on the person to whom they were directed: though a man of great presence of mind, bred in high life, and perfectly acquainted with the world, he could not keep himself from being a little abashed at receiving so grave and so severe a reprimand from a lady of Jenny’s years and inexperience; but soon recovering himself—‘Madam,’ said he, ‘I beg you will do me the justice to believe, that however ardent my passion is, I would scorn to attempt the gratification of it by any ways which my honour or my reason should condemn: that I love you, is most true; yet would I chuse rather to consume through the force of an inextinguishable flame, than to make the least encroachment either on your virtue or your peace.’

‘I do not, indeed, deny,’ continued he, ‘but that I have been told somewhat concerning an agreement made for you in your extreme youth: but as no consequence has since happened of that agreement, I flattered myself that your heart approved not of the choice made for you; was at full liberty to elect for itself; and that no impediment lay in the way of my ambition, but my own unworthiness of obtaining so inestimable a jewel.’

He concluded these words with a deep sigh, and a bow full of the greatest tenderness and respect. The grateful soul of Jenny was a little touched at his behaviour; and she immediately replied with an extreme sweetness—‘Were there no other bar than what you last mentioned, Sir,’ said she, ‘I believe there are few women, of any penetra-
tion

‘tion at least, to whom your heart
 ‘ would be an unacceptable present;
 ‘ and I shall rejoice to see it bestowed
 ‘ where equal worth and unpre-engaged
 ‘ affections may crown the utmost of
 ‘ it’s wishes.—‘ Ah, Madam!’ cried
 ‘ Sir Robert, ‘ why is this enchanting
 ‘ goodness lavished on a man who can-
 ‘ not thank the bounty? All my de-
 ‘ sires, alas! are centered in yourself:
 ‘ and to wish me happy with any other
 ‘ object, is but to wish me wretched.
 ‘ But tell me, tell me,’ pursued he,
 ‘ are you in earnest, absolutely deter-
 ‘ mined, to give your hand to this too
 ‘ fortunate rival? Is it a thing mutu-
 ‘ ally resolved between you?’

Jenny, knowing very well what he had been informed of concerning the supposed infidelity of Jemmy, was charmed with his politeness in imputing the delay of their nuptials rather to an indifference on her side than a dislike on his, and now more desirous than ever of entirely stifling all fallacious hopes, which in the end might prove destructive to his peace, compelled her modesty to confess to him, that she really loved Jemmy; and that her inclinations would have preferred him to all the men in the world, even though they had not been destined for each other by their parents.

Sir Robert could not hear this declaration without pain; but being fully persuaded in his mind, by what Lord Huntley, Mr. Lovegrove and others, had assured him, that Jemmy but ill repaid the tenderness of his fair mistress, he assumed courage enough to offer a second petition to her consideration. ‘ Well, ‘ Madam,’ said he, after a little pause, ‘ I will not presume to call in question ‘ the merits of the man whom you are ‘ pleased to favour; I will believe him ‘ as deserving as I am sure he is happy: ‘ yet if any accident, yet unforeseen, ‘ should happen to disunite you; if any ‘ thing, impossible as it may seem, ‘ should render him ungrateful for the ‘ blessing he enjoys; might I hope my ‘ love, my truth, my perseverance, ‘ would in time find some room in a ‘ corner of that heart which, doubtless, ‘ then would have exterminated it’s first ‘ ideas?’ This insinuation was far from working the effect it was intended for; Jenny was highly offended at it; and, turning from him with somewhat of a disdainful air—‘ To demand a promise,’ said she, ‘ on suppositions without founda-

‘ tion, is so chimerical as scarce to
 ‘ deserve an answer: but, Sir Robert,
 ‘ on this you may depend, That when-
 ‘ ever Mr. Jessamy shall prove himself
 ‘ unworthy of my love, I shall, instead
 ‘ of giving him a successor in my heart,
 ‘ detest and avoid mankind for ever.’

Sir Robert was now conscious he had gone too far; and, desirous of preserving her esteem, if he could not gain her affection, endeavoured all he could to excuse the rashness of his late suggestions; which possibly he succeeded in better than he imagined, as Jenny was sensible it was owing to the base report that had been raised: she would not, however, seem to forgive too easily any reflection cast upon her dear Jemmy, but continued in the same serious deportment till the return of the company put an end to all discourse between them on this score.

CH A P. XXIII.

RELATES HOW, IN THE COMPASS OF AN HOUR, JENNY MET WITH TWO SURPRIZING ADVENTURES OF VERY DIFFERENT KINDS; AND THE MANNER IN WHICH SHE BEHAVED IN THEM, WITH SOME OTHER LESS EXTRAORDINARY PARTICULARS, WHICH THE READER WILL DOUBTLESS BE PUZZLED TO KNOW THE MEANING OF.

AFTER what had passed between Jenny and Sir Robert, that gentleman thought it would be in vain to prosecute his suit; his friends also, to whom he imparted the conversation he had with her, were of the same opinion; and the report of Jemmy’s inconstancy began now to lose much of the credit it had obtained among them.

Sir Robert, whose esteem for Jenny was not at all diminished by her late behaviour towards him, though it had made him endeavour to overcome his passion for her, omitted nothing in his power to reconcile himself to her good graces; which he at length effectually did, by giving her the strongest and reiterated assurances that he would never more attempt to interrupt that affection which he now seemed to believe mutually existing between her and Mr. Jessamy. The same easy freedom of conversation

versation which had reigned among this amiable company since their first coming down to Bath, was now again restored: but it lasted not long; accidents on accidents, in which every one had a share, immediately fell out, and turned all into discord and confusion.

Among the crowd of guests who were every day at the tea-table of Lady Speck, there was a gentleman named Celandine; he had but lately returned from making the tour of Europe; and, like Clodio in the play, pretended to be acquainted with all the intrigues of the several courts he had been in: he was gay, spirited, had some wit, and abundance of assurance; which, with the affectation of good-humour, made him pass for a very agreeable companion, and particularly entitled him to the favour of the ladies, many of whom thought the loss of reputation no disgrace when forfeited on his account.

He was certainly very much indebted to Nature for a handsome person, and to education for all those modish accomplishments which, with unthinking people, are apt to cast a lustre even on the worst qualities of the mind; his example was at least a proof of this melancholy truth; for it would have puzzled even his best friends and greatest admirers, if asked the question, to have found any one virtue in him compensate for a thousand vices: he was vain to an excess; ungrateful, insincere, incapable either of love or friendship; a contemner both of morality and religion: in fine, he was a libertine professed. His family was ancient and honourable, and from thence descended to him a very large estate, which, without doing one generous or benevolent action, he seemed to take abundance of pains to get rid of by the most unheard-of and ridiculous extravagancies and vagaries.

The reader will perhaps imagine, that a character such as this deserved not so particular a description; nor should I have troubled him with it, had there not been an absolute necessity of my doing so, for reasons which will presently appear. Jenny was at home alone one day; Lady Speck and Miss Wingman were gone into the walk; but some letters she had received from London, which required immediate answers, had hindered her from accompanying them: having finished what she had to do be-

fore they returned, she went down into the garden, in order to refresh her spirits after the fatigue they had undergone by writing so much longer than she was accustomed at one time.

She took a short promenade in the great alley; but, being in a contemplative mood, retired into an arbour at the farther end of it; where, as the reader may remember, the performers in Lord Huntley's interlude had been concealed. There could not, indeed, be a more proper scene for indulging meditation; and she was just beginning to fall into a very agreeable reverie, when on a sudden Celandine appeared at the entrance of the leafy bower, and accosted her with these lines, translated by himself from a French poet:

'So look'd Pomona when Vertumnus came,
'And with immortal raptures clasp'd the
'dame.'

As great a favourite as this young gallant was with most of the women of his acquaintance, Jenny had never been able to endure the sight of him, on account of his pert confident behaviour; but his presence was now doubly unwelcome to her, as there was nobody but herself to entertain him, or to bear a part in the impertinent freedoms of his conversation; and she could not forbear giving him a look which might have dashed the boldness of any other man, and made him quit the place. But Celandine, as has been before observed, and Jenny in this visit experienced to her cost, was none of those who were capable of being awed either by looks or words. Full of his own merit, and puffed up with frequent successes among the fair, he thought the whole sex at his devotion; that no woman could withstand his charms, and that the coldness Jenny had always treated him with was no more than an affectation of modesty in publick, which, on his making the first overtures of a passion for her, would vanish in an instant, and she would drop into his arms as rain does from the firmament.

'How kind is Fortune to me,' said he, approaching her, 'in giving me this opportunity of speaking in private to my angel!'—'If you are indebted to Fortune for no greater favours,' replied Jenny, 'you have but small cause to thank her bounty. But pray,'

I continued

continued she, 'how came you to be out of the walks this fine day, when all the world are there?'—'I might ask you the same question,' answered he; 'and equally wonder why I find the enchanting Miss Jessamy here, moping in solitary shade, and neglecting to increase the number of her conquests, and add new triumphs to her eyes: but I will tell you,' pursued he, catching hold of her hand; 'it was Fate, propitious Fate, ordained it so for both our happiness: some kind good-natured demon put it into your head to stay at home, and in mine to seek you here.'

He concluded these words with throwing one of his arms about her neck, and began to kiss her with vehemence. Hard it is to say, whether surprise or rage, at being treated in this manner, was most predominant in her soul: she broke from him; and, starting some paces back—'What means this rudeness?' cried she. 'Give not so harsh a name,' rejoined he, 'to the emotions of the most tender passion that ever was.'—'A passion for me!' said she, in a voice full of disdain. 'Yes, for you!' replied he, staring her in the face. 'Did my eyes never tell you the secret of my heart?'—'No, really,' said she; 'I never examined into the mysterious dialect, nor desire to have it explained.'

With these words she was going hastily out of the arbour, but the nimble Celandine at one jump got between her and the entrance, and in spite of all the resistance she could make, forced her back to the bench where he had found her sitting. 'No more prudery,' cried he, 'nor this pretended coyness; we are now alone, and the means of being so are not easy to be found in such a place as Bath: do not, then, by this unseasonable reserve, make me lose the golden glorious opportunity that Heaven has sent, of giving you the most substantial proofs how much my soul adores you; how much I prize you above that Heaven itself.'

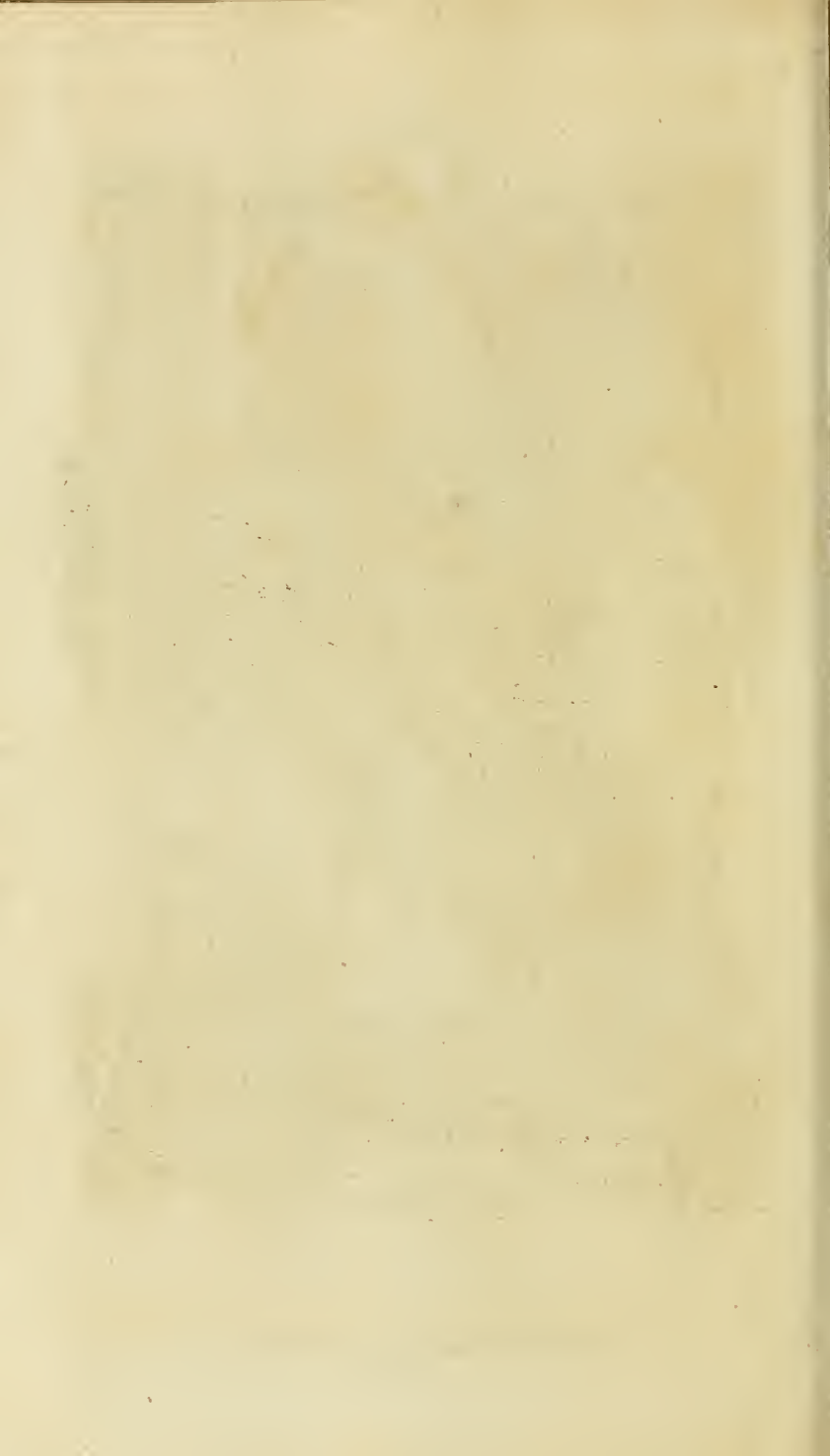
It is as impossible to paint the distraction Jenny was in, as it was for her to express it, or relieve herself from the impending danger to which she was reduced. 'They were at too great a distance from the house for her cries to alarm the family; he held her fast down

on the seat, with his hands on both her shoulders; she could only call him Monster! Villain! while he, regardless of her reproaches, uttered things which made her modest heart shudder at the sound of. To what horrid freedom he might have proceeded is uncertain: a sudden rustling among the branches, which twined about the latticed arbour, made him relax the hold he had taken of his fair captive, and turn to see what had occasioned this interruption. Jenny lost not the instant of her release, but rather flew than ran out of that detested place; when, just at the entrance, she was met by a woman, or, to speak more properly, a fury armed with a penknife; which she had doubtless plunged into the bosom of the defenceless fair, if Celandine, who was close behind, had not been very quick in wresting it from her hand.

'What fiend, thou cursed creature!' cried Celandine, 'has prompted thy malice to attempt this execrable deed!'—'What fiend but thyself, thou worse than devil?' answered she, almost foaming at the mouth with passion. Jenny staid not to hear what farther passed between them, but ran screaming down the alley; Lady Speck and Miss Wingman, accompanied by Mr. Lovegrove, entered the house at that very moment, and were the first who came to her assistance.

Never were three people in greater consternation than they; Jenny, with arms extended, and garments all disordered, crying out for help; Celandine, at some distance, with the utmost confusion in his looks, and at his feet a woman, who seemed either dead or in a swoon. In vain they enquired the occasion of all this; Jenny was incapable of speaking, by the fright which yet hung upon her spirits; the intended murders, by the condition she was in; and Celandine, by his guilt. Mr. Lovegrove, who had more presence of mind than any of the rest on this occasion, finding no answers were given to their interrogatories, stepped forward to convince himself if the person who lay upon the earth were alive or dead; and this action of his it was that probably recovered Celandine the use of his tongue: but the first and only token he gave of it, was to say, it was a mad woman, who had some how or other gain-





ed admittance; and to desire the servants might be ordered to carry her out of the house.

Mr. Lovegrove having found the person he spoke of in this manner was only in a fainting-fit, cried out—‘What—ever she is, her figure, as well as the present condition she is in, seems to demand rather compassion than contempt.’ On this Lady Speck and her sister ran to assist the charitable endeavour he was making for her recovery; but Jenny still kept at a good distance; and Celandine, who, for all his impudence, was not provided with fit answers to the questions which were likely to be put to him, took the opportunity of their being thus engaged to sneak off, without giving any notice of his going.

By this time the woman of the house, with all the servants, were got into the garden; and among them the unhappy stranger was carried into a parlour, and laid upon a couch, where proper remedies being applied, she came a little to herself.

C H A P. XXIV.

CONTAINS SOME PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE FURIOUS STRANGER, AS TOLD BY HERSELF.

THE company to whom Jenny had now related the dangers she had escaped, were very impatient to know the whole of this adventure; and perceiving the person chiefly concerned in it was recovered enough to be able to satisfy their curiosity, began almost all at once to ask what had induced her to attempt such an act of barbarity; but that unfortunate creature had not the power, for a considerable time, of making any other answer than a torrent of tears, which gushed from her eyes with such rapidity, as drew compassion even from Jenny herself. The violence of that passion, however, which so long had stopped the passage of her words, having found this vent, she entreated their pardon for the disturbance she had caused, and thanked the charitable relief that had been offered her, in terms so polite, as made every one see she was not of the lowest rank of life.

Then turning to Jenny—‘But it is you, Madam, I have most offended!’

said she. ‘Oh! had I perpetrated the horrid deed, Heaven, sure, must have decreed some new and yet unpraetised torture for a crime like mine.’ Here she ceased, to give way to some sighs, which were just then forcing themselves from her afflicted bosom; after which—‘Yet that Heaven, to whom I now appeal,’ cried she, ‘is witness for me, as well as my own conscious soul, that I was clear of all malice, all premeditated design, against you. When I drew that cursed knife, I meant not to hurt your innocence, but to do justice to myself on the villain that was with you. Some demon in that instant, sure, turned my erring arm from it’s intended mark to save his brother fiend.’

‘Who is this fiend, this villain, you are speaking of?’ cried Lady Speck, with some emotion. ‘Oh! there is no name so foul, so black, as he deserves!’ replied the other: ‘but if you would paint a wretch, in whom all vices, all corruptions, meet as in their centre, then call him Celandine!—Oh, ladies!’ continued she, in the extremest agonies, ‘why will you suffer such a serpent near you? Wherever he comes he brings destruction with him, and bitterness of heart with everlasting infamy are the legacies he leaves behind him!’

It is probable she would have run on with these exclamations much longer, if Mr. Lovegrove had not reminded her, that as the person was not there, she would do better to inform the company of the cause of her complaint against him: ‘For,’ said he, ‘you neither can be justified nor be condemned in our opinion, without your letting us into the secret of his crime.’

‘Alas!’ answered she, bursting again into tears, ‘neither his crime nor my shame are secrets to the world; and as I am before persons of so much honour and goodness, I have reason to hope that a perfect knowledge of those unfortunate circumstances which brought on my undoing, will entitle me rather to compassion, than at all add to the contempt the late behaviour I have been guilty of must have excited.’

The ladies then, as well as Mr. Lovegrove, assured her, that she could no way so well atone for the confusion she had given them, as by making them

a faithful narrative of the motives which had induced her to it. On this she endeavoured to compose herself as much as possible; and, after a pause of a few minutes, in order to recollect the passages she was about to relate, began to do as she was desired, in these or the like terms.

THE HISTORY OF MRS. M——.

‘I Will not detain your attention,’ I said this afflicted woman, ‘with any impertinent particulars concerning a wretch so unworthy as myself; but beg you will afford a patient hearing of such as are absolutely necessary for the better understanding of my unhappy story.’

‘I was the only daughter of a gentleman, who, being a younger son, had no other dependence than a post in one of the publick offices. As he lived up to the height of his income, I was left at his decease, which happened when I was about seventeen years of age, with no other portion than a genteel education, some household furniture, and a few jewels. I had lost my mother in my infancy, so that I was altogether an orphan: my father’s brother, though possessed of a large estate, declined taking any care of me; and I knew not what would have become of me, if an aunt, by my mother’s side, had not been so good to admit me into her family, to preserve me, as she said, from falling into those temptations to which a maid of my years, and accounted not ugly, was liable to be exposed.’

‘I had not lived quite two years with this kind relation, before some business brought frequently to her house a gentleman called Mr. M——, who you must doubtless have heard of, as he makes a pretty considerable figure in the law: he took a fancy to me at first sight, which afterwards grew up into a passion; in fine, he loved me upon the most honourable terms; and asked leave of my aunt to make his addresses to me. The match was too advantageous for a girl in my circumstances to be refused: she pressed me to it; and as neither his person nor conversation were disagreeable to me, I consented, and in a short time became his wife.

‘Few women, I believe, can boast of more happiness than I enjoyed during the first seven or eight months of our marriage: my husband seemed to have no other study than that of obliging me; he was continually forming some new schemes of delight and entertainment for me; he never heard of any ornament of dress or furniture, in use with the *beau monde*, but he bought and brought it home to me. He could scarce bear losing the sight of me a moment; and, indeed, gave me more of his company than could well be spared from his avocation.

‘But the extremes of any thing are seldom lasting; this exuberance of transported love, this phrenzy of passion, if I may call it so, vanished by very swift degrees; as sudden coldness almost at once succeeded: he treated me civilly, it is true; retrenched no part of my expences; denied me nothing that I asked; but yet I found a mighty difference between this and his former behaviour. Ah, how dangerous it is for men to begin with demonstrations of a fondness which they cannot persevere in! I was young, vain, inconsiderate. I expected the same assiduity to please, the same raptures as at first, and could not brook the disappointment. I complained of this change of my condition to a female friend of more years and experience than myself: at first she laughed at me, and told me that nothing was more common, and that she had often wondered Mr. M—— held out the honey-moon so long.

‘This putting me beyond all patience—“Do not be so much out of humour,” said she: “your case is but the same with other women; and I believe I can direct you to a courtier that will infallibly retrieve all; and as it is the nature of mankind,” continued she, “to be rampant in the pursuit of their wishes, but languid in the full possession of them, you must give your husband room to apprehend he is not so secure of your heart as he has imagined. Toy with some pretty fellow before his face; send often for him, and affect to be uneasy till you see him: this will rouse your husband, if any thing will do it; jealousy new-points the darts of love, and whets the edge of
“satiated

“satiated desire; according to the poet—

“They dearly prize what they once fear to lose.”

‘I greedily swallowed this false doctrine,’ continued Mrs. M—— with a deep sigh, ‘and immediately resolved on making the experiment. Celandine, whose person I have no occasion to give a particular description of, as you all know him, seemed formed by nature for the purpose I intended. He came frequently to our house; my husband always treated him with the extremest respect, as indeed he had good reason to do, being indebted for his first setting out in the world, in the handsome manner he did, to the father of Celandine, whom both his parents had served, the one in quality of a steward, the other of housekeeper. The favours conferred on Mr. M——, even from his infancy, by that old gentleman, were such as made many people suspect there was a nearer affinity between them than was for my mother-in-law’s honour to acknowledge: be that, however, as it may, it is not my business to inspect into the faults of others, but bewail my own.

‘I had hitherto behaved towards my husband’s young patron, for so he always called him, with the reserve becoming the married woman; but now, according to the pernicious advice I had received, I put on the most light airs before him, and looked and talked in such a manner as might have made a man of much less vanity than he is endued with, imagine me to be most passionately in love with him. Whether my husband had really too much indifference for me to regard any thing I did, or whether he thought the extraordinary civilities I shewed to his friend were merely to oblige him, I cannot be certain; all I can say is, that he took not the least notice of this change in my conduct; nor could I perceive any alteration in his behaviour towards me upon it.

‘But Celandine, who thought me all devoted to him, was not of a humour to lose any part of the triumph of his new conquest: he assiduously watched every opportunity of being alone with

me; returned the pretended advances I had made him, with all the ardour of a man transported with them; till, at last, my heart became susceptible of the guilty flame, and what I had so fatally affected grew into reality: in fine, I loved him, was too weak to resist the dictates of my passion, and became a prey to the worst monster that ever wore the shape of man.’

Here Mrs. M—— became unable to proceed: she was not so entirely lost to all sense of honour and virtue as not to feel an extreme shock at the remembrance of what she was about to repeat; shame and confusion overwhelmed her heart, and threw her into a second fainting, from which she was not without some difficulty recovered.

C H A P. XXV.

CONTAINS A CONTINUATION OF
MRS. M——’S ADVENTURES.

THE unfortunate Mrs. M——, having once more regained the power of utterance, made a handsome apology for that interruption which grief and shame had occasioned in her recital; and then prosecuted it in the following manner.

‘It may seem strange, perhaps,’ said she, ‘that, with my innocence, I should lose all discretion too; yet so it was: fond even to madness of my undoer, and self-satisfied with my crime, I thought of nothing, regarded nothing, studied nothing, but how to gain fresh opportunities of repeating it. Whenever my husband was abroad, as of late he had but too often been so, I sent over half the town in search of Celandine: if he was not found, the ill-humour I was in sufficiently testified to all about me my impatience for the disappointment; and whenever he was with me, we were constantly locked up together, and all who came to visit me were denied access.

‘All this, as may easily be supposed, could be no secret: some of my acquaintance contented themselves with shunning my conversation; others still kept me company, but it was only to have the more opportunity of seeing

‘seeing and exposing my folly. I became the derision even of my own servants, as I easily perceived by the little obedience they paid to my commands, and the pert answers they gave, which were also accompanied with sneering countenances and malicious grins, whenever I went about to exert my authority over them as a mistress. Oh! how great was my infatuation! I can now, with astonished eyes, behold all these things distinctly; but at that time was blind to all that conduced not to the gratification of my love; or, as I then flattered myself, rewarding that of the man whom I considered as the most faithful, as well as the most charming, of his sex.’ Here the tears began again to flow; but she soon dried them up, and pursued the thread of her discourse.

‘My husband, I believe,’ continued she, ‘was the last person sensible of the dishonour I had brought upon him; but he could not long escape the hearing of what, had he not been blinded by his too good opinion either of myself or Celandine, he needed not to have been told. I am apt to think, however, that he gave not an entire credit to the story; for, if he had, he would not have taken the pains he did to be convinced.

‘He left Celandine with me one day, pretending that some very extraordinary business called him abroad; but, instead of going out, went and concealed himself in a closet within our bed-chamber; into which, thinking ourselves perfectly secure, we retired soon after his supposed departure. We had not been there many minutes before he rushed out, and surprized us in a manner as could admit no doubt of the crime we were guilty of. Celandine snatched up his sword, which lay in the window, and immediately drew it, expecting he should have occasion to use it: but my husband, in the same moment, eased his apprehensions on that score, by saying, with a voice which had more of grief than anger in it—“Put up, Sir: I have not forgot the obligations I have to your family; and am only sorry to find you have taken this method to acquit me of them. All I desire is, that you will leave my house

‘directly, and that from henceforward we may be utter strangers.” Celandine was in too much confusion to make any answer; and went away with all the speed he could.

‘As for my wretched self, fear, which, one would think, should rather have given wings to my feet, and made me fly the presence of an injured husband, rivetted me to the bedside on which I was sitting; my blood was all congealed; my spirits ceased to operate: he upbraided my treachery and perfidiousness in terms which, I must confess, they merited. I heard all he said; but had it not in my power to make the least reply, or to excuse or defend my crime, had it been in words to do either; but at that time, I was indeed bereft of speech as well as motion. Having vented some part of his indignation in revilings, he flung out of the room, and left me in the condition described.

‘No stupidity, sure, ever equalled mine; a death-like numbness had seized all my faculties; what little sense I had was bewildered and confused: I could not even reflect on the misfortunes to which my folly had reduced me, much less contrive any means to render them more supportable. How long I remained, or how much longer I should have remained, in this lethargy of mind, I know not; but it was almost dark when I was roused out of it by the sudden appearance of an elderly woman, a relation of my husband’s; who, with a stern voice and countenance, told me that she was sent by him to take care of his family; and that I must immediately go out of the house.

‘This message, and the manner in which it was delivered, stung me to the very soul: rage and disdain now quickened every nerve; I was all on fire, and raved against Mr. M—— in terms which would have made any one who heard me think that it was myself, not he, who was the injured person. To this she coolly answered, that it was not her business to argue with me on these points; that she had discharged her commission in signifying my husband’s pleasure to me; which, since I did not think fit to comply with, he must come himself, and put an end to the dispute; adding,

‘ adding, that he was not far off, and she would send directly for him.

‘ All my courage again forsook me; the sight of my husband, at this time, was more dreadful to me than any thing I could suffer in being banished from him: besides, my reason now convinced me, that, after so full a detection of my crime, I could not hope to live under the same roof with him; at least not till a long series of penitence and submissions should give me a title to his forgiveness. I therefore called the woman back, perceiving she was going to do as she had said, and told her, that, since it was my husband’s will I should depart, I would not provoke him by my disobedience.

‘ In speaking these words, I started up, went to the drawers, put a night-mob into my pocket, hurried on my capuchin, ordered a coach to be called, and seemed in as much haste to be gone as my husband was to get rid of me. While I was doing this, his kinswoman desired I would take the keys with me; saying that, if I sent them in the morning, she had orders to let me have every thing belonging to me. “Very well,” replied I, carelessly; “I shall know in the morning what I have to do.” The coach being at the door, I stepped hastily into it, and made the fellow drive me to a milliner’s in Covent Garden, whose customer I had been for a considerable time.

‘ I chose this woman’s house for an asylum in my distress, not daring to apply to any one of my relations: nor did I think it proper as yet to trust her with the whole secret of my guilt and my misfortunes; I only told her that I had a quarrel with my husband, and had sworn not to sleep with him that night; so desired she would be hospitable enough to afford me a bed, as I knew she had one to spare.

‘ The former part of that night I passed in the most cruel agitations; but towards the latter grew somewhat more composed: the vivacity of my temper represented to me, that I was not the first woman who had lived in a state of separation from her husband; that the discourse of these things was soon over; that I had a

lover who would always supply me with the necessaries of life; and that the loss of reputation would be atoned for by the endearments of so worthy a man. Thus, alas! was my judgment misguided by my fond passion for that ungrateful wretch!

‘ I dispatched a messenger to him next morning: he came immediately; desired I would provide handsome lodgings for myself; and assured me, with a thousand protestations, that his purse and his person should always be at my devotion. Notwithstanding this, I wrote to my husband, excusing my transgression as well as I was able: he sent me all the things I had left behind; but returned, for answer to my letter, that he was determined never to see my face again; and that all he would do for me was to pay for my board, on condition I would retire to a farm-house an hundred and fifty miles from London, and never more come back.

‘ Gladly, therefore, I accepted of Celandine’s offer; hired an apartment; and thought myself as happy as a woman in my circumstances could be. I was, indeed, but too well satisfied with my condition; I wanted for nothing that I desired, and had more than I could have expected of the company of the man I prized above the world. But, alas! these golden days were of a short continuance: too soon I found, by sad experience, that a lover, as well as a husband, could grow cool on a sure possession! I cannot, however, accuse him of being a niggard to me in his allowance for my support: but loving him to that excess I did, it was an adequate return of love which alone could make me truly blessed.

‘ At last, he talked of going to Bath: I testified an extreme desire of accompanying him; but he endeavoured to put me off by pretences, which seemed to me very trifling, till I insinuating upon his taking me with him, he plainly told me that I must not think of it; for he was to go with persons by whom it was wholly improper I should be seen. I wept; but he was not softened by my tears: only laying ten guineas on the table, he bid me console myself with that till his return; and then took his leave
‘ with

“with the same careless air as he could have done of the most slight acquaintance.

“Judge how severe a stab this must give both to my love and pride! I saw, by the manner of his refusing, that there was something more at the bottom than he made shew of, and resolved to fathom it, whatever should be the event: accordingly, as he left London in a post-chaise, I followed him the next morning in the stage-coach.”

Here the reflection on those wild lengths to which the folly of her passion had transported her, made her again unable to proceed; and the company were obliged to give a truce to their curiosity till she recovered herself enough to go on with her narrative, in the manner which will be seen in the succeeding Chapter.

CHAP. XXVI.

WILL GRATIFY THE READER'S IMPATIENCE WITH THE CONCLUSION OF MRS. M——'S HISTORY; AND ALSO WITH WHAT EFFECTS THE RECITAL OF IT PRODUCED IN THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO HEARD IT.

THE unfortunate Mrs. M—— having dried up her tears, and made the best apology she could to the ladies for this interruption, resumed her discourse in these words.

“I took up my lodgings, on my arrival here,” said she, “at the inn where I alighted, and sent immediately in search of Celandine: he came the next day; but his looks, before he spoke, made me know how little he was pleased with seeing me. “I thought, “Madam,” said he, “I said enough to prevent you from coming hither; and am surprized you should act in a manner so contrary to my inclination!”

“I told him that I found it impossible to live so long a time without him, and a great deal of such fond idle stuff; which he as little regarded as, indeed, it deserved: he insisted on my return to London the next morning; which, after some tears, I at last promised to do, on condition that he

would dine with me that day. It was with some difficulty I prevailed upon him to give me his company, even for the few hours I requested it: nor would I have taken so much pains to obtain so small a favour, if I had not flattered myself with being able to win him yet farther to my purpose.

“But my hopes deceived me: in vain I tried all the arts that love inspired me with; he was inflexible to all my entreaties, unmoved by my endearments, and treated all I said to him on the score of my staying here with so much contempt, that the pride and spirit, which my passion for him had but too much quelled, began to rouse themselves in me. I told him that he had no right to prescribe the place of my residence; that Bath was equally as free for me as for himself; and that I would not leave it. On this he started up; and, with a countenance full of spite—“It is very well!” said he; “you then may stay: but, I fancy, you will find it extremely difficult to support yourself either here, or any where else, without my assistance; which, you may be assured, I shall never afford to one who acts in opposition to my will.”

“The consideration of my wretched circumstances made me tremble at this menace, and again reduced me to submission: I implored his pardon for the rashness of my passion, and promised I would hereafter do every thing as he would have me. This pacified him; and, sitting down again—“I would have you,” said he, “behave like a reasonable woman, and one who knows the world: our amour has been of a long continuance; and you cannot expect a man like me should always confine himself to one object. To deal sincerely with you, I am here on the invitation of a woman of condition, whom I have the good fortune to be well with: if you offer to interfere with my pleasures, I have done with you for ever; therefore it depends entirely on yourself to keep me your friend or not.”

“It is amazing, even to myself, to think how I had the power to conceal the agonies which rent my heart at this impudent declaration: yet it is certain that I did so; I avowed to do every

every thing he required of me, and to regulate my conduct, henceforward, so as never to offend him. He seemed pleased with my assurance; put five guineas into my hand to defray the unnecessary expences, as he called it, of my coming hither; gave me a kiss, wished me a good journey; and then left me to indulge the transports of a rage the more violent for having been suppressed.

I did not, however, waste much time in giving way to emotions which would neither avail my love or my revenge. To think of doing what I had promised to him was far from me; I resolved to see the face that had supplanted me in his affections: how afterwards I would behave I did not then consider. This was the first great point on which my soul was fixed; and, to accomplish it, I went that evening and hired a lodging in the most private part of the town. The people of the house, on my signifying to them that I wanted an adroit boy, or young fellow, to run on errands, and wait on me, while I staid at Bath, were so kind to help me to one exactly fit for my purpose: he had been waiter at a coffee-house last season when Celandine was here, and he knew him perfectly well.

The chief business I employed him in was to stand sentry near the house where Celandine lodged, to watch him wherever he went; to find out the names and characters of the persons he visited; and to bring me an exact account. By the diligence of this emissary I discovered that he visited here every day; that he constantly attended three ladies from hence to the walks, the long-room, the play, and all publick places; that one of these ladies he seemed most particularly attached to; and that she was called Lady Speck.

Mrs. Lovegrove turned his eyes on Lady Speck, at these words, with some surprize: she was in a good deal of confusion, and cried out—‘Your spy was mistaken in his intelligence in this point: his attachment was equal to us all; and, I dare say, was equally regarded.’

‘Pardon me, Madam,’ resumed the unfortunate historian; ‘I knew not then, nor am yet certain, to which of

you the name of Lady Speck belongs. You will not wonder that, in those moments of my jealous rage, I wished destruction on the charms that had undone me: but this unlucky day, above all, I was least able to command my passion; the boy brought word that he had seen Celandine in the walks with two of you, whom presently he quitted, and hurried to this house; on which I concluded the third lady, who staid at home, and to whom he was in so much haste to retire, was the person whom I should henceforth look on as my rival; and at that instant, fired with emotions to which reason can set no bounds, I muffled myself up as you see, and ran through the streets like one broke loose from Bedlam. On my coming here I found the door open; a servant-maid was doing something in the hall; and, on my enquiring for Celandine, she told me he had come in a little before, and, she believed, was then in the arbour at the lower end of the garden; for she had seen him pass that way. I flew directly to the place she mentioned; but the fury I was in had so blinded me, that I did not readily perceive the entrance. I heard the voice of my perfidious lover, and thrust my head through the lattice; and my whole body had certainly broke through that slender partition, if those who occasioned my despair had not that moment rushed out of the place. At this sight distraction took possession of my brain; all hell, and it’s worst furies, were in my heart; I drew my penknife, resolved to sheath it in the villain’s breast.—But I know not how it was,’ continued she, addressing herself to Jenny, ‘you, Madam, were nearest to me; and the blow I meant for him, in my mistaken rage was aimed at you: what followed I am wholly ignorant of; for my disappointed rage recoiling upon myself, together with the rude blow the villain gave me in wresting the penknife from my hand, stopped all the springs of life, till your charitable endeavours put them again in motion, and called me back to sense, to shame, to misery, and the racks of thought.’

Thus did Mrs. M—— conclude her tedious narrative, but did not give over
K speaking

speaking till she afresh entreated pardon of the company for the disturbance she had occasioned in the family, and of Jenny in particular, who had suffered most through the extravagance she had been guilty of; to which that young lady, with a great deal of sweetness, though not without some blushes at the remembrance of Celandine's behaviour, replied in these terms: 'I can easily forgive the fright you put me into,' said she, 'as I know not but it was your seasonable interruption which chiefly preserved me from a worse mischief than that which I was threatened with by your mistaken jealousy.'

'I did not know, my dear,' said Miss Wingman with a gay air, 'that the inclinations of Celandine were devoted to you; or that he left us so abruptly in the walks on purpose to have the pleasure of entertaining you alone.' Jenny was about to make some answer, but was prevented by Mr. Lovegrove, who hastily taking up the word, cried out—'It is difficult, Madam, to know the real inclinations of a man such as Celandine; for I take him to be one of those so elegantly described by Mr. Rowe in his play called the Fair Penitent—'

"A singing, dancing, worthless tribe they are,
 "Who talk of beauties that they never saw,
 "And boast of favours that they ne'er en-
 "joy'd."

In repeating these lines, he fixed his eyes on Lady Speck, who seeming more than ordinarily pensive, and making no answer, he went on: 'The poet,' resumed he, 'throughout that whole performance, shews himself very much a friend to the ladies, especially when he gives them this advice:

"Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom you
 "trust,
 "Would you but think how seldom fools
 "are just,
 "So many of your sex would not, in vain,
 "Of faithless men, and broken vows, com-
 "plain.
 "Of all the various wretches love has made,
 "How few have been by men of sense betray'd!
 "Convinc'd by reason, they your power
 "confess,
 "Pleas'd to be happy as you're pleas'd to
 "be;
 "And, conscious of your worth, can never
 "love you less."

Here ensued a silence, which perhaps had continued yet longer, if it had not been broke by Miss Wingman, that young lady having her thoughts more at liberty than any of the company, and who indeed loved talking so well, that it was a pain to her to forbear it for a considerable time. Turning towards Mrs. M——, 'I am surprized, Madam,' said she, 'that your unfaithful lover, having the confidence to avow his guilt, by telling you that he came down to Bath on the invitation of a woman of fashion, you had not the curiosity to ask him the name and quality of the person for whose sake you were undone; since he had so little discretion as to let you into one part of the secret, he would certainly have made you acquainted with the whole, if you had desired it.'

'It must be confessed,' rejoined Jenny, 'that such an enquiry would have been highly natural in Mrs. M——; and, if answered to her satisfaction, might have saved her the trouble of employing an emissary to watch the motions of Celandine: but, for my part, I have little cause to wish it had been so; since it was to her mistaken jealousy I was indebted for the seasonable relief I received from the insolent impertinences of that vain and unworthy coxcomb.'

'It is also possible, Madam,' cried Mr. Lovegrove, in an extraordinary emotion, 'such an eclaireissement might have been attended with worse consequences than you think on. Who can tell, added he, with still more vehemence, 'but that he might have mentioned the name of some lady who wants not an admirer zealous enough to have vindicated her reputation at the expence of his own life, or that of the traducer?'

'I know not,' replied Mrs. M——, sighing, 'what consequences may have been prevented, or what might have ensued, by the discovery of my rival: but this I am certain of, that I was so shocked at his ingratitude, so astonished at his assurance, and so terrified with his menaces, that I had neither presence of mind nor courage to put the question to him.'

Lady Speck, who had not spoke one syllable for a considerable time, now affected a prodigious *gaieté de cœur*: 'The demand you mean,' said she, 'I believe

believe would have been to very little purpose; I dare answer Celandine would have been strangely puzzled to have informed you in any particulars of the fond lady for whose sake he came to Bath; men of his romantick disposition worship images of their own formation, boast of visionary favours, and take as much pleasure in the shadow as others do in the substance."

"True, Madam," cried Mr. Lovegrove, gravely; "but if they should happen to assign real names to their ideal mistresses, what but the blood of such a villain could atone for his presumption?" No reply was made to this; and Mrs. M——, thinking it would best become her to take leave of the com-

pany, which she did in the most respectful manner, every body assured her they pitied her misfortunes, and that they sincerely wished something might happen to extricate her from the labyrinth in which she was at present involved.

After she was gone, there soon remained none but Miss Wingman and Jenny to maintain a conversation. Mr. Lovegrove, a good deal disconcerted at some passages he had heard related by Mrs. M——, pretending business called him, went away; and Lady Speck, who was extremely out of humour, and had been at some pains to conceal it, took this opportunity of retiring to her closet, in order to compose the troubles of her mind.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
JEMMY AND JENNY JESSAMY.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAP. I.

DISCOVERS SOMETHING WHICH MAY SERVE TO PROVE THAT, THOUGH LOVE IS THE ORIGINAL SOURCE FROM WHICH JEALOUSY IS DERIVED, YET THE LATTER OF THESE PASSIONS IS THE MOST DIFFICULT OF THE TWO TO BE CONCEALED, AND ALSO LESS UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF REASON.

HERE are so many secret windings, such obscure recesses, in the human mind, that it is very difficult, if not wholly impossible, for speculation to arrive at the real spring or first mover of any action whatsoever. How, indeed, should it be otherwise, as the most virtuous and the most vicious propensities of nature are frequently, in a more or less degree, lodged and blended together in the same composition, and both equally under the influence of a thousand different passions, which disguise and vary the face of their operations so as not to be distinguished even by the persons themselves? It has already been observed, that there were some peculiarities in the humour and conduct of Lady Speck, which she had

policy and prudence enough to conceal entirely from the world; and, though not the most intimate of her acquaintance, not even her sister, could ever penetrate into the secret motives of her behaviour, which, to them, seemed frequently pretty strange, it is fit the reader should not be denied the satisfaction, at least as far as the above-mentioned promises will admit. As her ladyship had found very little happiness in marriage, she had been too much rejoiced at being released from that bondage by the death of her husband ever to think of entering into the same state a second time; but, having observed that this was commonly the profession of all widows, and as commonly ridiculed by those who heard it, she forbore making any mention of her resolution in this point.

She had very little vanity in her composition, but loved a variety of company; she was pleased to find herself continually surrounded by a crowd of gentlemen; but had been equally, if not more so, if they had visited her on any other score than that of courtship. She behaved to each of them so much alike, that jealousy was a thing unknown among these rivals; and, as none of them had any great cause to hope, so likewise none of them thought he had cause to despair of being one day the happy man: and her youth,

her

her beauty, her wit, her fortune, made her appear too valuable a prize not to persevere in the pursuit of.

Thus easy, thus happy in herself, and delightful to all that saw her, did she live, and reign the general toast and admiration of the town; when Celandine arrived from his travels, full fraught with all those superficial accomplishments so enchanting to the unthinking part of the fair-sex. What attracts the eye is too apt to have an influence over the heart: his agreeable person, his gaudy equipage, and the show he made, dazzled the senses of even those who most affected to be thought wits; he was the theme of every tea-table, and the chief object for whom the arts of the toilette were employed. Lady Speck had heard much of him before she saw him; but he was soon introduced to her acquaintance by a lady who frequently visited her, and had always spoke wonders in his praise. Whether it were that she was prepossessed with the good opinion she found others had of him, or whether it was to himself alone he was indebted for the impression he had made on her, is uncertain, but nothing can be more true than that, at first sight, she felt for him what she had never done for any man after whole years of assiduity.

It is also altogether as impossible to determine if it was by any kind looks he perceived in her towards him, or by the great confidence he had in his own merits, that he was emboldened to declare himself her lover; it was, however, either to the one or to the other that she owed the triumph of this new conquest; and he had not made her many visits before she was confirmed in it by the most violent protestations that tongue could utter. It seemed, notwithstanding, extremely strange to her, that, amidst all the testimonies he endeavoured to give her of his love, he never once mentioned marriage; but, on the contrary, would frequently, in her presence, ridicule the institution; say it was a clog upon inclinations, and only fit to link two people together who had no notion of the true joys of love, or of living politely in the world. He often had the impudence even to repeat to her, in justification of his prophane position, all the lines he could remember from any of the poets who had ex-

ercised their talents in satirizing that sacred ceremony; particularly these of Mr. Dryden—

- ‘ Marriage, thou curse of love, and snare of life!
- ‘ That first debas’d a mistress to a wife!
- ‘ Love, like a scene, at distance should appear;
- ‘ But marriage views the gross-daub’d landscape near.
- ‘ Love’s nauseous cure! thou cloy’st whom thou should’st please;
- ‘ And, when that’s cured, then thou art the disease!
- ‘ When hearts are loose, thy chain our bodies ties;
- ‘ Love couples friends, but marriage enemies!’

But his behaviour on this score gave her not the least disgust towards him: she was herself an enemy to marriage; and besides, his estate, though large, was not an equivalent for that she was in possession of; nor was any part of his character such as she thought becoming a man whom she would make a husband of. She, nevertheless, loved him, nor took any pains to repel the kindness which every day grew stronger for him in her heart: she was amused with his conversation, delighted with his addresses, looked on him as a pretty play-thing, charming toy! which it would be doing too great a violence to her humour to throw away.

All this will, doubtless, give the reader no very favourable idea of her virtue; but we will suppose it was only a Platonick liking she had for him: how far, indeed, the dangerous liberties she allowed herself to take with him might have carried her, if they had been continued much longer, no one can pretend to say. She was not, however, so much lost in the tender folly she indulged, as not to be perfectly sensible that the manner in which she conversed with Celandine could not, if known to the world, but occasion a great deal of discourse, little to the advantage of her reputation; and that it behoved her, above all things, to keep this secret of her soul from taking air: to do this, she put in practice all the arts that a just fear of censure could inspire her with. When Celandine was present with other company, she affected to railly and turn into bagatelle every thing he said or did; and, when he was absent, to ridicule those vanities and sopperies which

which she had understanding enough to see in him, though not, in reality, to condemn him for. She not only treated those gentlemen who before made their addresses to her with a greater shew of favour than she had been accustomed to do, but also encouraged every new offer of that kind that was presented to her: and this conduct proved so effectual for the purpose she intended it, that no one person suspected Celandine was among the number of her lovers, much less that he was the darling favourite of her bosom.

Being in this situation, it is easy to conceive what racks of mind the must sustain on the account that had been just given by Mrs. M——: to be told that Celandine had an amour, and to hear it averred by the very woman who had been her rival, was a mere trifle in comparison with what followed. That he was found in the close arbour with Jenny was the thing that stung her to the quick, when she remembered that Celandine had met herself and sister in the walks; and how, instead of squireing them, as usual, he had only made a slight compliment, and abruptly left them; and that, as Jenny had excused herself from going out on account of some letters she said she had to write, it appeared plainly to her that he went not from the walks but with a design of going to Jenny; that she staid not at home but in expectation of his coming, and the appointment was previously agreed upon between them.

Most women have naturally so good an opinion of themselves as not to believe easily that the man who has once loved them can transfer his affections to another, without some very extraordinary arts put in practice for that purpose by the new object. Lady Speck thought herself as handsome as Jenny; and therefore concluded, that the amorous inclination which Celandine had all at once testified for that young lady could be owing to nothing but some advances made to him on her part.

How unjust and how cruel a passion is that of jealousy! It destroys all the nobler principles of the soul; it erases thence all the ideas of virtue, religion, and morality; it makes us not only condemn the innocent, and acquit the guilty, but also inspires us with the most savage and inhuman sentiments.

Lady Speck now hated her fair friend more than ever she had loved her: her beauty, her wit, all those accomplishments which had excited her esteem, rendered her now the object of her aversion. She was almost tempted to wish Mrs. M—— had perpetrated her outrageous design, if not to the destruction of her life, yet to the defacing of those charms which had triumphed over her in the heart of Celandine; and was little less angry with him for having prevented the fatal blow aimed against her rival, than she was for his faithfulness to herself.

Of all the various agitations that by turns convulse and rend the human heart, there are none which instigate to more pernicious purposes, or bring on, if continued, more disastrous consequences; but the flame, however violent it may flash for the present, can have no long existence in a mind not wholly divested of all good-nature and generosity: cooler and more reasonable sentiments, on a little reflection, soon abated the force of those turbulent emotions which had taken possession of this lady's bosom, but as yet were not powerful enough to suppress them entirely: what effects followed, either of the one or the other, will hereafter appear; but the conflict was for some time interrupted by some company coming in, whom Lady Speck was obliged to go down to receive, as they were more her guests than her sister's, and altogether strangers to Jenny.

CH A P. II.

CONTAINS A FARTHER CONFIRMATION OF THE POSITION ADVANCED IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER, AND ALSO SOME OTHER PARTICULARS EXCITING THE CURIOSITY OF THE READER.

LADY Speck assumed a countenance as serene as possible, to entertain, with her usual politeness, the persons who came to visit her; but, in spite of all her endeavours to appear entirely easy, she could not keep herself from darting such ill-natured glances on Jenny, whenever she looked towards her, as must have been taken notice of by that young lady, if she had not been too

too much engrossed by her own thoughts to be capable of penetrating into those of another.

The company stayed so late, that the infant they were gone, the ladies retired to their respective chambers. Jenny, who had her mind no less employed than Lady Speck, with the adventures of the day, was equally pleased to be alone, and indulge meditation on what had passed. The history of Mrs. M—— had dwelt very much upon her mind; but what made the most deep impression, was that part of it wherein she related the first motive which occasioned her fall at once from happiness and from virtue, and consequently drew on her all those dreadful misfortunes with which at present she was encompassed.

I believe the reader will easily remember, as the thing is of a pretty particular nature, how that unhappy woman, in order to revive those ardours of affection in her husband which she imagined were beginning to decay, had recourse to the dangerous stratagem of giving him a rival; and also how by coquetting with Celandine, and treating him with a shew of liking, the counterfeited flame kindled by degrees into a real one, and ended at length in her utter ruin and confusion.

The notions Jenny had of honour and generosity were too refined and delicate not to make her look with the utmost contempt on all kinds of artifice, on what pretences soever they were put in practice: this conduct of Mrs. M——'s, though, considering what ensued, the least guilty part of her character, seemed to her so highly criminal, as well as weak and mean, that she could not help thinking it worthy of all the punishment it met with. 'How is it possible,' cried she within herself, 'that a woman who truly loves virtue can be capable of putting on an appearance so much the reverse of it? What! if at that time she had no intention of gratifying the amorous inclinations of the man she sported with, to encourage them in him was a manifest violation, not only of modesty, but likewise of religion, honour, and those solemn obligations which she had entered into. Besides,' continued she, 'this wretched creature seems not to want sense enough to know the heinousness of the fault she was guilty of, even in this first step to

perdition; yet she ran boldly into it, and absolved herself on account of the good end she proposed by it, to regain the affections of her husband. Oh, how ridiculous was such an attempt for doing so! as if any man of common reason would love his wife the better for suspecting she was about to commit the worst and most shameful action a woman can be guilty of! I have seen some young ladies,' went she still on, 'that have made use of these little tricks to inspire jealousy in their lovers; either to make trial of their constancy, or shew their own power by giving pain: this is certainly silly as well as cruel; but what is no more than vanity and folly in them, is downright wickedness in a married woman.'

Thus did she pass some time in censuring the conduct of Mrs. M——; but as she was of that happy turn of mind to convert every thing which she either saw or heard of to her own advantage, and to make fresh improvements in herself by the misbehaviour of others, her reflections carried her yet farther, and remembrance presented her with an incident which happened long before she had the power of judging, but which she had heard much discourse of in her extreme youth. It was this.

A person of great distinction happened to be married to a lady very young and beautiful; she was a celebrated wit without being wise, and had the most romantick turn of mind; fancying herself a Statyra, she expected her husband should approach her with the obsequiousness of an Orcondates: he was little versed in histories of this nature; and though he loved her very well, treated her as a mere woman: the epithets of Angel and Goddess were strangers to his mouth; and those he usually saluted her with, were plain 'Madam,' or 'My Dear.' This disgusted her even in the first days of their marriage; she looked on such a behaviour as an indignity to her charms; her heart reproached the indecacy of his manners, and half despised him for his want of taste; nor did her tongue restrain itself from testifying how much she was dissatisfied at every thing he said or did.

The fashion in which he found himself used by her, gave him some disquiet at first; but it lasted not long: though a man of sense, he was naturally indolent

lent to an excess; he loved his ease too well to part with it on any consideration whatever; he never thought any thing worth attempting the pursuit of which was likely to be attended with difficulty; and as he had never taken the pains to examine what it was that his wife expected from him, so he would have been equally negligent in gratifying her humour, if he had been better acquainted with it.

Their way of living together grew every day still worse and worse: as her haughty sullenness encreased, his carelessness of it encreased in proportion. All the love they once had for each other turned into a mutual indifference, or rather a mutual aversion: she sought the food for her vanity among those who were of a disposition to indulge it; and she found not a few to whom the glory of pleasing a lady of her beauty, birth, and accomplishments, did not seem well worth all the flatteries they could address her with; the husband, in the mean time, made himself not wretched on account of the gallantries she received, but fled for consolation to the arms of a more obliging and endearing fair.

They continued to live together, however, in the same house; but slept not in the same bed, nor eat at the same table, except for decency sake when company was there, before whom they always behaved to each other with the greatest good manners and politeness imaginable. But this was a constraint which neither of them could long support; they parted by consent; after which her amours became the general topick of conversation; till, shunned by all her kindred, despised by her acquaintance, and slighted by those for whose sake she had sacrificed her reputation, she became sensible of her follies, and sought a reconciliation with her husband: but all her endeavours for that purpose were in vain; she hated a place where she no longer had either friends or admirers, and went a voluntary exile into foreign parts, where grief and remorse soon put an end to her life.

This incident threw Jenny into the most serious contemplations on the human system: the many observations she had made, convinced her that vanity was in a more or less degree inherent to the whole species; and that men as well as women were not exempt from it; and immediately recollecting some passages

she had seen which demonstrated this truth—' Good God!' cried she, ' how can any one be so fond of this idol frame, this poor machine, liable to be withered by every inclement blast that issues from the firmament! Let the proud of heart read Gulliver's Voyages to the Houhynims, and some other pieces of the same excellent author, and they will see and be ashamed to admire a body which requires such means to be sustained. No,' continued she, ' it is the mind which ought to be the chief object of our attention; it is there alone we are either beautiful or deformed; and the pains we take to ornament and embellish that nobler part of us will not be thrown away.'

She was so taken up with these philosophick reflections, that she went not to bed till the beams of Aurora darting through the window-curtains, reminded her how much she had lost of the time commonly allotted for repose. It was somewhat more late than ordinary when she rose the next morning: on her coming down stairs, she found the ladies already in the room where they always breakfasted; and guessing, by some circumstances, that she had made them wait, was beginning to apologize for her tardiness.

' Indeed, my dear,' cried Miss Wingman, interrupting her, ' we were afraid you were not well, and were just going to send to your chamber: but pray,' continued she very gaily, ' let me examine your countenance, and see if that will tell me whether you are quite got over the fright that terrible woman put you into yesterday.'

Jenny was about to make some answer; but Lady Speck, who could not forgive her for the part she bore in that adventure, took up the word before the other had time to open her mouth. ' The fright was of little consequence,' said she with an air which had something of derision in it, ' as she was delivered from the danger before she could have any apprehensions of it: but there were other particulars that happened afterwards, which perhaps were of a yet more disagreeable nature, and might make a deeper impression.' These words, and the tone in which they were spoke, gave Jenny an infinity of surprise; but without pausing to form any conjecture on the matter—' You will
L ' pardon

'pardon me, Madam,' cried she, innocently, 'if I am not able to comprehend your ladyship's meaning. I know of no accident that happened afterwards, or, indeed, in which I had the least concern.'

'How weak is it,' replied Lady Speck, 'in people to endeavour to conceal a passion, which, in spite of all they can do, will break out in every look and gesture! I pity you from my soul; and, had I sooner known the situation of your heart, would have contrived some way or other to have prevented Mrs. M—— from being quite so open in her narrative: it must certainly be a very great shock to you to hear some passages she related; but, alas! I was entirely ignorant that Celandine loved you, or that you loved Celandine; and little suspected that it was for his sake you so resolutely rejected the offers of Sir Robert Manley.'

'I should be sorry, Madam,' replied Jenny very disdainfully, 'that your ladyship, or any one else, should have so contemptible an opinion of my judgment. I know but little of the gentlemen, yet know enough to make a just distinction between them; and, were my hand and heart at my disposal, I should not hesitate one moment to which of them I should give the preference.'

'How cunning now you think you are!' said Lady Speck with an affected laugh: 'you speak the truth, but avoid mentioning the name: I will, however, do it for you, and answer in somewhat like the poet's words:

- 'Tis Celandine your heart would leap to meet,
- While Manley lay expiring at your feet.'

Scarce had Jenny the power to restrain her passion within the bounds of decency, on finding Lady Speck persisted in so injurious an accusation. Scorn and anger overwhelmed her soul, tears gushed from her eyes; and, rising hastily from her seat—'I will not imagine, Madam,' said she, 'that you are really in earnest in supposing such a thing; but the jest is of such a nature, as I do not think it becomes me to hear the continuance of.' In speaking these words she was about to quit the room; but Miss Wingman, who had

been a good deal astonished at what her sister had said, ran and pulled her back: but all her persuasions would have been ineffectual to have detained her, if Lady Speck, having vented her ill-humour, and now repenting she had gone so far, had not added her entreaties.

'My dear creature,' cried she, 'I had not the least design to affront you; I only meant to rally you a little on your staying at home, when so fine a day called every body to the walks.'—'I should have deserved it, Madam,' answered she, 'if I had denied myself the pleasure of attending your ladyship on any other motive than what I really did: but I assure you I wrote no less than five letters, as your own man can witness, whom, my own being out of the way, I took the liberty to send with them to the post-office.'—'I believe it,' said Lady Speck; 'I believe it; and heartily ask your pardon.' She was going to add something more by the way of reparation for the vexation she had given that young lady, when she was prevented by her woman; who having been sent to a milliner's for some things she wanted, came running into the room with a countenance as confused and wild as if she had met some spectre or apparition in her way.

'Oh, Madam!' cried she to her lady, 'I have the strangest thing to tell you, the oddest accident; to be sure, I was never so much surprized in all my life!'—'Pr'ythee, at what?' demanded Lady Speck. 'Lord, Madam!' returned she, 'I could not have thought such a thing of two such civil, well-behaved, gentlemen.'—'What gentlemen?' said Lady Speck: 'explain the mystery at once, and do not keep us in suspense by your unreasonable exclamations.'—'Lord, Madam!' replied she, 'your ladyship will wonder when you know all, as well as I: for my own part, I was so confounded, that I scarce know which way I got home. Just as I was stepping into the milliner's, bless me! I shall never forget it; but I will tell your ladyship as fast as I can: just as I was going into the shop, as I was saying, I heard a great noise in the street, and the sound of several men's voices crying out—"Bring them along, bring them along!" I turned about, as any one would do, out of mere

‘ mere curiosity; and, would your ladyship believe it possible? who should I see but Mr. Lovegrove and Mr. Celandine in the hands of I know not how many rough fellows, and followed by a huge crowd of all sorts of people! I fancy they had been fighting, for both their swords were drawn, and carried by one of the men that had hold of Mr. Lovegrove. I cannot directly say how that matter was; but there was a strange confused noise among the mob: one cried, it was a sad thing that such broils should happen; and another, that it would be a great prejudice to the town: and all I could hear distinctly was, that they were going to carry the gentlemen before a justice of peace.’

All the ladies were very much concerned at hearing this intelligence; but Lady Speck seemed the most affected with it; nor did the others at all wonder at her being so, as Mr. Lovegrove was her declared admirer, and was allowed by all that knew him to deserve more of her favour than he had as yet experienced.

They were all extremely impatient to know both the occasion and the consequence of this affair; and Lady Speck’s woman either having not enquired, or not been able to learn, to what magistrate the gentlemen were carried, footmen were immediately dispatched to every quarter of the town, in hopes of bringing home that information, which the reader shall presently be made acquainted with.

C H A P. III.

COMPLEATS THE CHARACTER OF A MODERN FINE GENTLEMAN, OR A PRETTY FELLOW FOR THE LADIES.

I Believe there are none into whose hands these volumes shall happen to fall, at least if they consider the story of Mrs. M—— with any attention, but will easily perceive there was enough in it to give a very great alarm to a man so much enamoured as Mr. Lovegrove.

He had observed, that for some time before, as well as since their coming down to Bath, Celandine had been a constant dangler after Lady Speck.

Love and jealousy are quick-sighted passions: he thought also, that though she ridiculed and laughed at his assiduities, she was not so much displeased with them as she ought to have been. This had frequently given him some uneasy apprehensions: but as there were several other gentlemen of worth and honour who made their addresses to Lady Speck, as well as himself; and she had never given him any assurance of distinguishing him above his competitors; he thought it would be too presuming in him to call her ladyship’s conduct in question; especially in regard to a man who did not publickly profess himself her lover, and whose person, character, and behaviour, she always affected to despise.

But now to be told, that he had impudently boasted his coming down to Bath was on the invitation of a woman of quality, from whom he gave some hints of having received very extraordinary favours; and to find that the person to whom he said this had any reason to guess the woman of quality he mentioned was no other than Lady Speck; was such a shocking corroboration of his former suspicions, as fired him with the extremest rage.

Whether Lady Speck had in reality granted any favours to Celandine, or whether it was his own idlevanity alone which had made him talk in the manner he had done, this generous lover thought it would become him to chastise the insolence of such a braggadocio: but in what manner he should do so very much perplexed him; to send him a challenge on this account he feared would make too great a noise, and consequently displease the lady whose honour he meant to defend. After much debating within himself, an expedient came into his mind, which he immediately put in execution. He found by what he had heard Jenny say to Mrs. M——, that Celandine had taken the liberty to treat that young lady in a manner very unworthy of her character. This seemed to him a good pretence for covering the face of his design; and therefore resolved to make her quarrel appear as the chief motive of his resentment, touching only obliquely on that he had conceived against him in regard to Lady Speck.

Having well considered on all the consequences that might probably attend

tend the step he was about to take, and fully determined with himself to pursue it, he wrote to Celandine, that same evening, in the following terms—

‘ TO R. CELANDINE, ESQ.

‘ SIR,
‘ YOU have affronted a young lady
‘ of distinguished merit, at present under the protection of the woman I adore; and, it is said, have given room for suspicion of your having also entertained thoughts of herself altogether unbecoming you: I think it therefore a duty incumbent on me to demand that satisfaction which every gentleman has a right to expect, when injured in the persons of those he professes to esteem. I shall be glad to see you to-morrow morning about six, in the first field at the end of the Walks, where I flatter myself you will not long suffer yourself to be waited for by yours,

‘ E. LOVEGROVE.

‘ P. S. I shall come alone, for I see
‘ no need that any friends, either
‘ of yours or mine, should be involved in this dispute.’

This billet he sent by one of his servants; who, after staying a considerable time, returned with an answer containing these lines—

‘ TO E. LOVEGROVE, ESQ.

‘ SIR,
‘ I Am sorry you should desire any
‘ thing of me which suits not my
‘ humour to comply with: Lady Speck
‘ and Miss Jessamy are both of them
‘ very fine women; but, upon my soul,
‘ I think neither of them, or any other
‘ woman, worth drawing my sword
‘ for; so must desire you will excuse
‘ my refusing to meet you on this score;
‘ on any other you may command
‘ yours,

‘ R. CELANDINE.’

It would be difficult to decide, whether anger or contempt was the most predominant passion in the mind of Mr. Lovegrove on reading the above: he resolved, however, not to suffer the influence of that bad man to go unpu-

nished; but went very early the next morning to his lodgings, to force from him the satisfaction he required; or, still persisting to refuse it, to give him such treatment as men are ordinarily accustomed to receive after behaving in the manner he had done.

As he was going towards the house, he perceived, while at some distance, a post-chaise waiting at the door; and before he could well reach it, saw Celandine just ready to step in: on this he sprung forward with all the speed he could, and, catching Celandine by the arm—‘ Stay, Sir!’ cried he; ‘ you must not think to leave this town without making some atonement for your behaviour in it.’

‘ Sir,’ replied the other, with some hesitation in his voice, ‘ I give an account of my actions to no man, nor has any man a right to inspect into them.’—‘ Every man of honour has a right to inspect the actions of a villain!’ rejoined Mr. Lovegrove fiercely; ‘ and if you are guilty of such as you have neither justice to acknowledge, nor the courage to defend, you know the recompense you are to expect.’

‘ I dare fight!’ said Celandine; and immediately drew his sword, as did Mr. Lovegrove his at the same time; but both were prevented by a great posse of people, who in an instant were gathered about them, drawn thither by the outcries of Celandine’s servants, the postilion, and the people of the house, who were come to the door to take leave of their lodger; and it was the expectation of this seasonable interruption which doubtless inspired the antagonist of Mr. Lovegrove with so much boldness on a sudden.

They had scarce time to make one push before they were disarmed by the populace; and a constable, who lived hard by, coming to interpose his authority to put an end to the fray, took possession of both their swords, and told them they must give him leave to conduct them to a magistrate: they readily submitted; and were followed by a continually-increasing crowd, as Lady Speck’s woman had described.

They soon arrived at the house of a gentleman in the commission of the peace, who happened to be a person of great worth and honour. Celandine exhibited a most piteous complaint against his adversary; first, for sending him

him a challenge to fight on account of things which he said he knew nothing of; and afterwards for assailing him in the streets, putting a stop to his journey, and occasioning a riot and disturbance in the town. Mr. Lovegrove was entirely silent till the other had left off speaking, and then related the whole which had passed between them, naturally as it was. The magistrate could scarce forbear smiling, but desired to see both the letters; on which Celandine produced the challenge; but Mr. Lovegrove being unwilling to expose the names of the ladies, which the other had indiscreetly mentioned in his answer, said he had it not about him, and believed he had lost it.

After having heard both parties, the worshipful gentleman began to expatiate, in terms besitting his character, on the bad custom of duelling: he said, that though the too frequent practice of it had rendered it not dishonourable, yet it was directly contrary to the rules both of religion and morality, and to the laws of society as well as those of the land: after which he recommended to them, and even exacted their mutual promise, to regard each other from that time forward, not as enemies, if they could not do so as friends.

‘I will not take his word, Sir,’ cried Celandine hastily; ‘I am convinced he has malice against me in his heart; I go in danger of my life by him; and desire I may be admitted to make oath of it, and that he may be bound over.’ This could not be refused, and the book was immediately presented to him. ‘Are you, Sir, of the same way of thinking too?’ said the justice to Mr. Lovegrove. ‘No, upon honour, Sir!’ replied he; ‘I am not under the least apprehensions on the score of this gentleman: and dare answer for him, that if there was as little danger in his tongue as there is to be feared from his sword, he would be the most un hurtful creature breathing.’

It was with difficulty the justice restrained himself from laughing; but preserved as much an air of gravity as he could on the occasion. ‘Well, then, Sir,’ said he, ‘I am compelled, by the duties of my office, to discharge your adversary, and oblige you to give security for your future behaviour towards him.’

On this, Celandine thanked him, and took his leave. Several of the crowd, who had burst into the hall, followed him with a thousand scurrilous jests and sneers at his cowardice; but he was too much a man of peace to take any notice of what they said; and, making what haste he could to the chaise, which still waited for him, set out for London, probably wishing he had not left it to come down to Bath.

Mr. Lovegrove sent for Lord Huntley and Sir Robert Manley, who immediately came; and all the little formalities of this affair being over, and settled to the satisfaction of the gentleman before whom they were, he threw off the magistrate, and assumed a character more natural to him, that of a man perfectly well-bred and complaisant: he was very pleasant with them on the conduct of Celandine; compelled them to stay breakfast with him, and entertained them as elegantly as such a repast would admit of.

CH A P. IV.

RELATES SOME PASSAGES SUBSEQUENT TO THE PRECEDING ADVENTURE.

AFTER the gentlemen had quitted the justice’s house, each repaired to his respective lodging, in order to dress for the remainder of the day; but meeting again at the coffee-house, it was agreed to adjourn from thence to make a morning-visit to Lady Speck and her fair companions, without mentioning a word of what had happened; Mr. Lovegrove being desirous that the whole affair should be kept a secret from them, unless chance should by any way make a discovery of it to them.

Those ladies were all this while in a good deal of uneasiness: the servants who had been sent out for intelligence were all returned, without being able to bring any thing material for the satisfaction of their curiosity. Miss Wingman and Jenny had both of them a very great regard for Mr. Lovegrove; the one, as having known him a considerable time; and the other, as having perceived in him many indications of his being a man truly worthy of esteem.

But Lady Speck had her own reasons

sons for being much more perplexed than either of them could be: she had an high esteem for Mr. Lovegrove on account of the amiable qualifications he was possessed of, and the long and respectful court he had made to her. The caprice of her destiny had made her find something in the person of Celandine which had attracted but too much of the more tender inclinations of her heart; and to think that any danger threatened either of these gentlemen was an extreme trouble to her.

But what touched her yet the more deeply, was the concern she had for her own reputation: she doubted not but that the quarrel between them was on her score; nor, indeed, could she well assign any other probable motive for it; especially when she reflected that Mr. Lovegrove, on hearing Mrs. M—— say that Celandine had come to Bath on the invitation of a woman of quality, had given her not only some looks, but also several hints, that he entertained the most jealous apprehensions that herself was the woman of quality whose favours that sop had so impudently boasted of. She had good reason, therefore, to be fearful that an affair of this nature might occasion her name to be brought in question, and perhaps, too, not in the most honourable fashion.

Suspicion is a kind of magnifying-glass, which represents whatever ill we dread in it's most formidable shape. This poor lady figured to herself a thousand distracting images; and, though she spoke but little, gave such visible demonstration of her inward disorders as could not but be taken notice of both by Jenny and Miss Wingman. As neither of these young ladies as yet had ever harboured the least suspicion of her having a particular regard for any man, much less of the sentiments that Celandine had inspired her with, they imagined they had now made a discovery; but it was in favour of Mr. Lovegrove; and both of them cried out almost at the same time—'How happy would Mr. Lovegrove think himself if he saw how your ladyship is disquieted on his account!'

Though Lady Speck affected to be a little peevish at their seeming to suppose her capable of having a tenderness for any man; yet she felt as much satisfaction as the present situation of her

mind would admit her to enjoy, in finding they marked out Mr. Lovegrove as the object, and that Celandine was quite out of the question with them on that account.

'Indeed, sister,' said Miss Wingman, 'it has always been my opinion, and I believe all your friends are of the same, that the person of Mr. Lovegrove, his accomplishments, his fortune, and long services, render him not unworthy of your acceptance; and, I think, you need not be angry, nor ashamed, that this accident has discovered your sensibility of his passion.'—'Lord, my dear, how very silly you are!' said Lady Speck: 'no one man has any charms for me above another. I am only vexed that men should fall out, fight, and kill one another; and this, too, for nothing perhaps, or, what is next to nothing, some idle punctilio of imaginary honour.'

Just as she had ended these words, the door was suddenly thrown open by a footman; and Lord Huntley, Sir Robert Manley, and Mr. Lovegrove, came altogether into the room. 'What, ladies,' cried the latter of these gentlemen, with an air more than ordinarily gay, 'not yet dressed! We came to attend you to the walks, and you are still in your dishabille!'—'We must have been strangely insensible,' replied Lady Speck, 'to have thought of dress when two of our acquaintance were going to embroe their hands in each other's blood!'—'Our hands are all clean, I think, Madam!' said Mr. Lovegrove. 'But can you add,' rejoined she hastily, 'that your heart is also so? Can you say you did not rise this morning with an intention to destroy, or be destroyed yourself?'

Here Mr. Lovegrove appearing a little confused, as debating within himself whether it was most proper for him to confess or to deny the fact, Lord Huntley immediately took up the word. 'No, faith, Madam!' said his lordship, with a smile; 'I dare answer so far for my friend, that he arose not this morning with the least animosity to any thing worthy of his sword.'—'No ambiguities, my good lord,' resumed she; 'I expect a plain answer to my question—therefore tell me at once, Mr. Lovegrove, how happened you to quarrel with Celandine, and which

‘which of you was the aggressor? You find,’ continued she, perceiving he was still silent, ‘that we are no strangers to the main point; and consequently have a right to expect you should gratify our curiosity with the particulars.’

‘It never has been my practice yet,’ Madam, replied Mr. Lovegrove, after a little pause, ‘to disobey your ladyship in any thing; nor must I now do it in this. You command me to tell you the motive of my quarrel with Celandine; and I must answer, it was on the score of justice and of virtue. You also ask who was the aggressor; to which I must also answer, that it was Celandine; who, by affronting a person loved and esteemed by you, justly merited chastisement, not only from me, but from all who have the honour of being acquainted with your ladyship.’

‘So, then,’ said Jenny, ‘I find that all this bustle is to be placed to my account.—But I would not have you imagine, Mr. Lovegrove,’ continued she, laughing, ‘that you are entitled to any acknowledgments from me, since I am indebted for what you have done entirely to the friendship I am honoured with by Lady Speck.’

Mr. Lovegrove was about to make some reply, but was prevented by Sir Robert Manley; who, approaching her with the most respectful air—‘Madam,’ said he, ‘if others had been as early acquainted with the presumption of Celandine, the glory of being your champion would certainly not have fallen to the lot of Mr. Lovegrove.’—‘I am glad, then,’ returned Jenny, ‘that it happened as it did; because otherwise I should have been laid under an obligation which it was not in my power to requite.’—‘It is of no importance, my dear,’ interrupted Lady Speck, ‘either who is the obliger or the obliged; and I only want to be fully informed in the particulars of this foolish transaction.’

On this, Mr. Lovegrove repeated all that passed between himself and Celandine, till their being carried before a magistrate; and would have gone through the whole, but Lord Huntley and Sir Robert Manley assisted him in the rest, and gave so pleasant a detail of Celandine’s behaviour on that occasion, as was highly diverting to the ladies. But,

though Lady Speck laughed, as well as her sister and Jenny, and affected to appear equally unconcerned at what she heard; yet there still remained something on her spirits which she could not forbear testifying in these or the like terms.

The little narrative being concluded—‘I am very glad,’ said she, ‘that no worse consequences attended this adventure; yet I cannot help being a little concerned that any thing should happen to occasion my name, or that of Miss Jessamy, to be mentioned before a magistrate, and such a mob of people as generally croud in to be witnesses of the decision he gives in cases of this nature.’

‘No, Madam!’ replied Mr. Lovegrove hastily; ‘I do assure your ladyship that neither of you have any cause to be in pain on that score; your names were held too sacred to be quoted as the subjects of a quarrel: and it was for this reason I refused to produce Celandine’s answer to the billet I sent him; he having imprudently, I might say impudently, too, inserted them in that scrawl.’—‘How!’ cried Lady Speck, with the utmost impatience in her voice and eyes; ‘let us see on what pretence the creature presumed to take that liberty!’

Though it is more than probable that Mr. Lovegrove was far from being displeased at having this opportunity of convincing Lady Speck in what manner she had been spoken of by Celandine, yet he suffered her to repeat her demand several times over before he complied with it; and, at last, seemed to do so with an extreme reluctance. ‘I intended, Madam,’ said he, ‘that no eyes but my own should have been witnesses of the unparalleled audacity it contains; but, as your ladyship commands I should deliver it to you, I neither can, nor dare, be disobedient.’

With these words, he took the letter he had received from Celandine out of his pocket, and presented it to her; adding, at the same time—‘This, Madam, however, will serve to prove, that, besides the first motive of my resentment to him, he subjoined another, not less deserving the punishment I designed.’ Her ladyship snatched it out of his hand with emotions

tions which it was not in her power to conceal; but having slightly looked it over to herself, grew a good deal more composed; and, forcing her countenance into a half-smile—‘ I doubt not,’ said she, ‘ but what Mr Lovegrove has said of this billet has raised a curiosity in you all for the contents; I will therefore read it aloud for the advantage of the company.’

‘ Well, ladies,’ cried Lord Huntley, as soon as she had done, ‘ though you have not yet the good fortune to have your merits peculiarly distinguished by this fine gentleman, you ought not to fall under too great humiliation, for you find he includes your whole sex; and plainly avows he looks upon no woman worthy venturing the tremendous discomposure of his well-tied sword-knot.’ Here followed much merriment among them, which had perhaps continued longer, as they were all persons of wit, and had so ample a field for ridicule; but it was now almost noon, and the ladies were not yet dressed; for which reason the gentlemen thought proper to withdraw, and leave them to consult their glasses on those charms that Celandine had affected to despise.

Jenny and Miss Wingman thought little of this adventure afterwards; but it made a very deep impression on the mind of Lady Speck: the delicacy Mr. Lovegrove had shewn in laying the stress of his resentment on the affront Celandine had offered to her friend, and not on the jealousy which she plainly saw he had conceived of herself, opened her eyes to those merits in him to which her partial inclination for the other had made her so long blind; and she now beheld both of the men such as they truly were, and not such as her unjudging fancy had lately painted them.

Ashamed of her past folly, she had no consolation but in the care she had always taken to conceal it from the world: as for Mr. Lovegrove, whose good opinion she was now most concerned to preserve, she resolved to behave towards him for the future in such a manner as should entirely dissipate whatever suspicions he might have entertained to her prejudice.

It was undoubtedly the good genius, or better angel, of this lady, which had brought about, however fortuitous they

might seem, such a happy concurrence of events as could not fail of awakening her to a just sense of what she owed to her character, and that esteem she was naturally so ambitious of maintaining. What advantages she received from this change of humour, and the emendations she was at present enlightened with, will hereafter be demonstrated; in the mean time, there are things of a yet more interesting nature, which demand the attention of the reader.

CHAP. V.

CONTAINS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, AN ACCOUNT OF A VERY EXTRAORDINARY, AND NO LESS SEVERE TRIAL OF FEMALE FORTITUDE AND MODERATION.

ACCORDING to all the observations which reason and a long experience have enabled me to make, happiness is a thing which ought to be totally erased out of the vocabulary of sublunary enjoyments: the human heart is liable to so many passions, and the events of fortune so uncertain and precarious, that life is little more than a continued series of anxieties and suspense: what we pursue as the ultimate end of our desires, the *summum bonum* of all our wishes, fleets before us, dances in the wind, seems at some times ready to meet our grasp, at others soaring quite out of reach; or, when attained, deceives our expectations, baffles our high-raised hopes, and shews the fancied heaven a mere vapour.

Nor is this to be wondered at, or indeed much to be pitied, in those who place their happiness in the gratification of their passions, all of which, in general, tend to the acquisition of what is far from being a real good. There are some, though I fear an inconsiderable number, who, composed of more equal elements, wisely avoid the restless aims, the giddy vain pursuits, with which they see so many of their fellow-creatures so intoxicated and perplexed; would fain sit down contented with their lot, whatever it happens to be; and, observing this maxim of the poet—

‘ Not to sit and turn about their feverish will,
But know their ease must come by lying still.’

Yet not even these can find an asylum from

from cares : though the soul, like a hermit in his cell, sits quiet in the bosom, unruffled by any tempest of it's own, it suffers from the rude blasts of others faults. Envy and Detraction are sure to taint with their envenomed breath ; treachery, deceit, and all kinds of injustice, alarm it with the most dreadful apprehensions of impending danger, and shew the necessity of keeping a continual guard against their pernicious enterprises : but above all, the ingratitude of friends is the most terrible to sustain ; that anguish which proceeds from the detected falshood of a person on whom we depend is almost insupportable ; nor can reason and philosophy be always sufficient to defend us from it ; as I remember to have somewhere read—

‘ Fate ne’er strikes deep but when unkind-
‘ nefs joins.’

This is certainly a very melancholy circumstance ; and the situation of the injured person’s mind cannot but be very uneasy. After having placed an entire confidence in any one whom we believe to be a friend ; after having entrusted him with the dearest secrets of our lives, and relied upon him for all the services and good offices in his power ; then, I say, to find him base, ungenerous, and deceitful, is as poignant an affliction as any to which language can give a name.

I know not whether to be eternally deprived of a real and experienced friend by the stroke of death, be not a less shock than it is to lose one, whom we have always believed as such, by his own infidelity. Under the former of these misfortunes we have the liberty to indulge many consolatory reflections ; first, that the great law of nature must be obeyed, and that there was an indispensable necessity for us to be one day separated ; secondly, in the hope that the person we lament is a gainer by this change, and much more happy than mortal life could make him ; and, thirdly, though it may seem, perhaps, a wild idea, in supposing a possibility that he may be still a witness of our actions, be pleased at our remembrance of him ; and, at the hour of our dissolution, even be appointed our conductor to the celestial mansions : but, under the latter, that of being betrayed by a false friend, we can have no such agreeable images before our eyes ; on the contrary, grief

and despair for ill-requited tenderness and sincerity, accompanied with remorse and shame for having made so unworthy a choice, must be the only subjects of our distracted meditations.

Thus impossible it is for minds the most serene by nature to remain always wholly free from inquietudes of one shape or other. Jenny, the heroine of this history, had a temper not easily discomposed, and well deserved that character which our English Sappho gave of a lady for whom she had a particular veneration.

‘ Cheerful as birds that welcome in the spring,
‘ No ill suspecting, nor no danger dreading ;
‘ In conscious innocence secure and blest’d,
‘ She liv’d belov’d of all, and loving all.’

And yet she met with something, which, if it had not all the effect it would have produced in most others of her sex, was at least sufficient to turn that so late harmonious frame of mind into a kind of chaos and inextricable confusion. Those arrows of vexation which the base contrivances of Bell-pine had levelled against her peace, had hitherto proved unsuccessful ; they had either missed their aim, or slightly glanced upon her without doing any real mischief ; but she now received a random shot, and from a hand which least designed to hurt her, that pierced her tender bosom to the quick, and left a wound behind which required a long length of time to heal.

Since the adventure of Celandine, the ladies had lived for some days in an interrupted scene of gaiety ; every day, almost every hour, brought with it some new pleasure or amusement : to heighten Jenny’s satisfaction, she had received a letter from Jemmy, acquainting her that his business was now near being concluded, and that he should very shortly be with her at Bath ; he wrote to her on this account in terms so positive, that she doubted not but his next would inform her of the day in which he was to set out from London. In that expectation she sent him an answer full of tenderness, expressing the sincere pleasure she took in the hopes he gave her of seeing him so soon, and desiring he would not let slip the first opportunity that presented itself of fulfilling his promise ; though, in effect, she thought this injunction very needless ; for she

had that perfect confidence in him, as to assure herself he would not lose a single moment that might bring him nearer to her.

But behold the swift vicissitudes of human affairs; how in one instant are the faces of things changed to the reverse of what they were! The ladies had been at a ball, which detained them till very late: on their coming home, Jenny remembering it was the day that the post came in, she asked if no letter had been brought for her; and being told there was, and that it lay upon her toilette, she wished the ladies a good night, and ran hastily to her chamber in order to peruse the letter, which she doubted not came from her dear Jemmy, with the certainty of his immediate approach. She was not, indeed, deceived in the former part of her conjecture; she saw it Jemmy's hand, and directed, as usual,

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY, AT BATH.

But what was her amazement, her consternation, when, breaking the seal, and unfolding the paper with all the impatience of the most warm affection, she found the contents as follows!

‘ DEAR ANGEL!

‘ WHEN I acquainted you with
‘ that burst engagement which
‘ an unavoidable necessity has laid me
‘ under, I little thought you would
‘ have resented it in the manner you
‘ now seem to do; especially when I
‘ assured you, with the utmost sincerity,
‘ that I would break from it as soon as
‘ I could find a pretence to do it with
‘ decency; you might, methinks, have
‘ known me better than to suspect I
‘ would omit any thing in my power
‘ to hasten the happy minute of flying
‘ to your arms with a heart unencum-
‘ bered with any cares but those of
‘ pleasing you.

‘ If you return the passion I have for
‘ you with half that gratitude you have
‘ so enchantingly avowed, you will re-
‘ pent; you must by this time repent of
‘ the pains you cannot but be sensible
‘ your cruel billet has inflicted on me.
‘ I flatter myself with being able to see
‘ you in a few days at our usual place
‘ of meeting; when, if you are as just
‘ as fair, you will be more kind to him
‘ who is, with an unextinguished flame,

‘ my dear charmer, your most devoted
‘ and faithful servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. If I have any friends among
‘ the intellectual world, I shall
‘ petition them to haunt your
‘ nightly dreams with the shadow
‘ of me, till propitious fortune
‘ throws the substance at your feet.’

What now was the condition of Jen-
ny! She re-examined the seal and the
hand-writing; she knew both too well
to flatter herself with a possibility of
their being counterfeited; nor was it in
her power to conceive that the engage-
ment mentioned in the letter could be
any other than that between herself and
Jemmy. Where are the words that can
furnish a description, where is the heart,
not under the same circumstances, that
can be truly sensible of what she felt?
Grief and indignation in these first mo-
ments were absorbed in wild astonish-
ment; convulsions seized her breast; her
brain grew giddy; her eyes dazzled,
while attempting to look over again some
passages in this fatal letter; and her
whole frame being agitated with emo-
tions too violent for nature to sustain,
she fell back in the chair where she was
sitting, and every function ceased its
operation.

Her maid, who was waiting in her
chamber, perceiving this, flew to her
assistance, threw some lavender-water
on her face, and at the same time scream-
ed out for help. Lady Speck and Miss
Wingman, being that instant coming
up to their apartment, heard the cries,
and ran into the room. They found
their fair friend without any signs of
breath, and motionless; they took hold
of her hands, and felt them bedewed all
over, as was her lovely face, with a cold
dead damp, like that of the last agonies
of departing life.

Surprized and frightened beyond
measure, they cut the lacings of her
stays; raised her gently forwards; ap-
plied hartthorn to her nostrils and tem-
ples, and every other remedy they could
think of; till at length, either through
their endeavours, or the force of nature
labouring for itself, she recovered by
degrees, opened her eyes, and uttered
some words, which, though inarticu-
late, rejoiced their hearts.

Reason and recollection, however,
were not as yet returned; and Lady
Speck

Speck finding her disorder still continued very violent, thought proper, late as it then was, to send for a physician; and in the mean time both she and her sister, as well as their women-servants, who were called in, assisted in putting her into bed, where she was no sooner laid than she grew better: not only her voice, but her senses also were enough restored to thank the ladies for the trouble they had taken; and to tell them, in order to conceal the real cause, that she believed her disorder was occasioned by her having danced too much that night.

The physician being come, she notwithstanding suffered him to feel her pulse, and promised to follow his prescription, which was only a composing draught for that night; though he departed not without giving some items that his advice would be necessary next day. The ladies, after having seen her take the dose prepared for her, retired, and left her to the care of her own maid and Lady Speck's woman, who both sat by her bed-side the whole remainder of the night.

CHAP. VI.

TREATS OF MANY THINGS AS UNEXPECTED BY THE PERSONS CONCERNED IN THEM, AS THEY CAN BE BY THE READER HIMSELF.

LADY Speck and her sister had no sooner quitted Jenny's chamber than she fell into a profound sleep; whether owing to the goodness of her constitution, the doctor's prescription, or the fatigue she had undergone, is uncertain, but she awoke next morning greatly refreshed, and much more so in spirits than could have been expected.

She now called to mind all the particulars that had occasioned her late disorder; and remembering she had not put up the letter, ordered it should be looked for and brought to her: the maid searched carefully about the room; it being no where to be found, she concluded that somebody must have taken it away, and by that means a secret would be divulged which she had much

rather should have been eternally concealed.

But as this suggestion was only a sudden start of female pride, of which she had as small a share as any of her sex, her good understanding easily got the better of it. 'I think,' said she to herself, 'the unfaithful man called his engagement with me a cursed engagement, and promised to break it off: if so, the discovery must be made some time or other; it is therefore of little importance when or by what means his perfidiousness is revealed.'

She was not mistaken, indeed; the letter had dropped from her hand as she fainted. Miss Wingman, during the confusion, seeing a paper lie on the floor, took it up; and finding *Jemmy's* name subscribed, was curious to know the contents, and for that purpose put it into her pocket without any one observing what she did. She kept not from her sister the knowledge of the petty larceny she had committed; and as soon as they were alone together, read it carefully over, examined every sentence, and made their own reflections upon the whole; which, prejudiced as they were with a belief of *Jemmy's* inconstancy, were yet less unfavourable to him in this point than those of his offended mistress.

They were, however, extremely incensed against *Jemmy*; and, sincerely pitying the case of their friend, resolved to say and do every thing they could to soften her affliction. It being near morning when they went to rest, the day was very far advanced before they arose; but they had no sooner quitted their beds than they repaired directly to *Jenny's* chamber, and found her much less disconsolate than they had imagined.

As that young lady doubted not but it was either *Lady Speck* or her sister who had taken away her letter, or at least some person who would not fail of communicating it to them, she had determined, before they came, in what manner she would behave on the occasion. The sisters, on their part, were not altogether so well prepared; they expected not that she was as yet in a condition to endure much discourse, especially on so tender and critical a point; they thought it would be time enough to entertain her on that head

when the first shock of her misfortune should be over, and had not therefore well considered how to break their knowledge of it to her.

This caution in them was certainly very prudent, as well as very kind; but Jenny had too much spirit and resolution not to render it unnecessary. On their entrance she started up in her bed, and said to them with a smile—‘ I guessed, ladies, that your good-nature would bring you hither; so was just going to rise, that you might be spared the trouble.’

‘ I am very glad,’ replied Lady Speck, ‘ to find that a disorder which seemed to threaten the worst consequences is likely to go off so well: but, my dear Miss Jessamy, I would not have you think of leaving your bed till your health is a little farther re-established. I will order,’ added she, ‘ breakfast to be brought in here; and, after that, would fain persuade you to take some repose.’

The maid then going out of the room to fetch the utensils for breakfast—‘ Instead of this goodness, Madam,’ said Jenny, ‘ your ladyship ought rather to chide me for my folly. The inconstancy and ingratitude of mankind are not things so new and strange to justify that surprize and confusion I was last night involved in.’

They looked on each other at these words, but made no answer; on which Jenny went on—‘ I am very sensible, ladies,’ pursued she, ‘ that neither of you are unacquainted with the cause of my disorder: the letter I received last night has informed you of all; nor am I sorry it has done what my tongue might have faltered in performing.’

‘ Since I have your pardon, my dear,’ replied Miss Wingman, ‘ I shall make no scruple to confess the theft which my curiosity made me guilty of; and I am the more ready to excuse myself for what I have done, as I am apt to think that the knowledge my sister and I have of this affair may enable us to give you some consolation under it.’

‘ Yes, my dear Miss Jessamy,’ rejoined Lady Speck; ‘ you must believe that, though greatly interested in all that concerns you, our minds were less disconcerted than yours must na-

turally be on reading that epistle; and consequently were in a better capacity of judging, and seeing into the heart of him who wrote it.’—‘ And what can you see there, Madam,’ cried Jenny hastily, ‘ but the most vile ingratitude and perfidiousness?’—‘ I am going about,’ said that lady, ‘ not to palliate his crimes; but I think it is your duty to thank Heaven, that by this incident of his directing to you what was doubtless intended for another, you are convinced how unworthy he is of your affection.’

‘ Besides,’ cried Miss Wingman, perceiving Jenny sighed, and made no answer to what Lady Speck had said, ‘ methinks it should please you to find, that if Mr. Jessamy has slighted you for the sake of Miss Chit, he slights her also for some other; and she has no less reason to condemn him than yourself.’

‘ Do you not think, then, that the letter was meant for her?’ demanded Jenny hastily. ‘ No, indeed,’ resumed Lady Speck; ‘ nor will you, when you consider more coolly on the matter, believe that any man, much less one so polite as Mr. Jessamy, would write in such a stile and manner to a woman he intended for a wife. This woman,’ pursued she, ‘ is rather some petty mistress, whom chance may have thrown in his way.’ On this Miss Wingman, after having urged something in defence of what her sister had said, returned the letter to Jenny, desiring she would examine it again, and then tell them how far she thought their opinion of it was unreasonable or improbable.

Jenny obeyed this injunction with a great deal of readiness; and after having paused for some moments on what she had read—‘ I confess, ladies,’ said she, ‘ that the freedom Mr. Jessamy takes with this woman is little becoming of an honourable passion; but the more base his inclinations are, the more reason I have to resent he should attempt a gratification of them at the expence of that respect due from him to the engagement he has with me.’

‘ Men will say any thing to gain their point this way,’ said Lady Speck laughing; ‘ and if hereafter you shall find no greater cause of complaint against him than what this letter gives you, I should almost pity his inad-

‘ vertency

‘vertency in exposing his folly to the only woman from whom it most behoved him to have concealed it.’

Just as she had ended these words, tea and chocolate were brought in; after which, as the maids were present, no farther discourse passed upon this subject. When breakfast was over, the ladies retired in order to dress, but not without conjuring Jenny to lie still, and endeavour to take a little more repose: she promised to comply, but had nothing less in her head, being glad to be alone, and at liberty to make her own reflections on an event which had occasioned so great a change both in her sentiments and humour.

As she had imagined, in the first hurry of her spirits on the receipt of this letter, that it was in reality wrote to Miss Chit, and a demonstrative proof of the truth of all that had been told her on that account by Lady Speck and Miss Wingman, it was no inconsiderable alleviation of her trouble, to be now pretty well convinced, that instead of making his honourable addresses to a woman of condition, he was only amusing himself with an affair of gallantry, a thing not much to be wondered at in a gentleman of his years and gay disposition; and her good sense would, doubtless, have enabled her to forgive it, but for the promise he seemed to have made to this new object of his flame, of breaking through all engagements, that he might devote himself entirely to her.

This, in a man whom she had always looked upon and regarded as her second self, appeared so treacherous and ungrateful, that resentment got the better of all the tenderness she once had for him, and made her resolve to take him at his word, and be the first to release him from those engagements he had treated in so unworthy a manner.

Thus did the greatness of her spirit refuse to yield to the impulse of grief; she got out of bed, in spite of all the entreaties of her maid to the contrary, put on her cloaths, locked safely up the proof of her lover’s infidelity in a little casket where she kept her jewels, and would even have gone down into the dining-room as usual, but found her limbs too weak to obey the dictates of her will; she threw herself into an easy-chair, and remained there for some time, in a situation of mind which only those

of my fair readers who have experienced somewhat like the same, can be capable of conceiving.

She was in a deep reverie when the ladies returned to her chamber: she spoke cheerfully to them; yet they plainly saw, through all the vivacity she assumed, that a heavy melancholy had seated itself upon her heart. They would not therefore leave her: they ordered dinner to be served up in that room; and, when it was over, called for a pack of cards, and obliged her to make one at ombre.

They had played but a very short time before a servant acquainted the two ladies that a man was below who said his name was Landy; that he was just come from London, and had brought letters of the utmost importance, which he was charged to deliver the moment of his arrival.

‘Bless me! my mother’s steward!’ cried Lady Speck. ‘Grant, Heaven,’ rejoined Miss Wingman, ‘that no hurt has happened to her ladyship!’ With these words they threw the cards out of their hands, and ran immediately down stairs.

Jenny, who at another time would have been anxious for any thing that concerned her friend, was now too much engrossed with her own affairs to give much regard to the exclamations these ladies had made, and returned to those reflections they had endeavoured to divert her from.

It was not long, however, before they both came back, and with countenances which denoted the most extreme surprise. ‘Well, Miss Jessamy,’ said the younger, ‘I have done my best to console you; you may now do the same kind office to me: all men are alike perfidious; there is, ’faith, no honour in the whole sex.’

‘Aye, my dear,’ cried Lady Speck, ‘such a monstrous piece of villainy is come to light, as, when you hear, will make you forget every thing besides.’—‘All that you can guess is nothing to it,’ resumed Miss Wingman; ‘but I will keep you no longer in suspense. You must know that I have just received two letters; the one from my guardian, Sir Thomas Welby, and the other from my mamma: she would not trust the intelligence they contained by the post, for fear of a miscarriage, but sent her own steward and

‘ard on purpose to me: you shall hear them both; I will begin with that from Sir Thomas.’

She then took the letter she mentioned out of her pocket, and read as follows.

‘TO MISS WINGMAN, AT BATH.

‘DEAR MISS,

‘I Thank Heaven for putting it in my power to discover to you, I hope time enough to prevent your ruin, as wicked a design as ever entered the heart of the most profligate of our sex to attempt against the innocence of yours.

‘I am ashamed to think that a nobleman of Lord Huntley’s birth and personal endowments can be capable of descending to such a low piece of villainy; yet so it is. I can assure you, my dear Miss, that nothing is more certain than that he is already married. His lady, I believe, is but lately come from Ireland, and is at present lodged at the house of a particular friend of mine! I both saw and spoke to her ladyship, under the pretence of having some business with my lord; she told me he was not in town, which indeed I very well knew, having been informed he had followed you down to Bath. There are, besides this, many other circumstances to evince the truth; but as they are too numerous, and too long, to be inserted in the compass of a letter, I shall defer giving you the detail of them till I have the pleasure of seeing you. My advice to you is, that you put it not in the power of this unworthy lord to deceive you any farther, but return immediately to London. Lady Wingman is of the same opinion; but as this letter will be accompanied with one from herself, I doubt not but it will have all the effect it ought to have on your behaviour. I am, with the best wishes, my dear charge, your very affectionate friend, and most humble servant,

‘T. WELBY.’

Jenny had no time to express any part of her sentiments on this occasion. Miss Wingman had no sooner ended her guardian’s epistle, than she proceeded to that from her mother; the contents whereof were these.

‘TO MISS WINGMAN, AT BATH.

‘MY DEAR CHILD,

‘I Cannot sufficiently express the trouble I am under on account of Lord Huntley’s baseness; the intelligence of which I first received from our good friend Sir Thomas Welby, and am since but too much confirmed in the truth of it by some enquiries myself has been at the pains to make. I must confess it was with difficulty I listened to any reports to his prejudice; I could not tell how to believe such foul deceit could be couched under a form so seemingly adorned with every virtue, as well as every accomplishment befitting his birth. But, my dear Kitty, we are never so easily beguiled as by the appearance of honour and sincerity. I tremble to think to what dangers you are exposed, while suffering yourself to be entertained with the insinuating addresses of a man who can mean nothing but to involve you in eternal wretchedness: I conjure you therefore, I command you by all the authority I have over you, never to see him more; to fly his presence as a serpent that watches to blast your peace and reputation with his envenomed breath. I have sent Landy on purpose to bring you this, and to attend you to London; and hope you will not detain him any longer than is necessary for your getting ready to set out. Farewell! That Heaven may have you always under it’s protection, is the unceasing prayer of, my dear child, your most affectionate mother,

‘K. WINGMAN.

‘P. S. I am not in a condition to write to your sister, but desire you will give my blessing to her; and let her know, that if she stays behind you at Bath, as I suppose she will, she may expect to hear from me in a short time. In the present confusion of my thoughts, I had almost forgot my compliments to Miss Jessamy, which pray make acceptable to her.’

Jenny could scarce find words to express her astonishment at what she heard; she could not tell how to think Lord Huntley guilty in the manner he was represented; and yet could less believe that

that Sir Thomas Welby and Lady Wingman, who she knew had always favoured his pretensions, would write as they had done without having undeniable proofs of the justice of their accusation.

The three ladies had a long conversation together, the event of which will be seen in the succeeding chapter.

CHAP. VII.

CONTAINS A BRIEF RECITAL OF
THE RESOLUTIONS TAKEN ON
THE FOREGOING ADVICE.

AMONG the many who made their addresses to Miss Wingman, there was none who had been so likely to succeed as Lord Huntley: she respected him so well, that had the information against him come from any other hands than those it did, she would not have given the least credit to it; but she loved him not enough to reject the admonitions of her friends, or to make her hesitate one moment if she should believe him guilty, or refuse to condemn a person whom they had found worthy of it.

Gay as she was by nature, she testified not the least reluctance to obey the commands of her mother in quitting Bath, and all its pleasures; and resolved to do so without seeing Lord Huntley before she went, or being at the pains of reproaching him with the crime he was accused of.

But as she seemed a little desirous that he should some way or other be made acquainted with her knowledge of his perfidiousness, and thought it as great an infringement of her mother's orders to write as to speak to him any more, Lady Speck was so obliging as to tell her she would take that task upon herself at his next visit.

Nor was it by this alone she proved the affection she had for her sister. 'As you were entrusted to my care by my mother,' said she, 'on our coming down to Bath, I am very loth to part with you till I have seen you safe again in her arms; therefore,' continued she, 'if Miss Jessamy consents, I should be glad to return all together to London in the same manner as we left it.'

Nothing could have been more agree-

able to Jenny than this proposal: she was not now in a condition to relish the pleasures of Bath, and longed very much to return to a place where persons are at liberty either to see all the world, or to live perfectly retired, as suits best with their humour or circumstances.

'I am charmed with your ladyship's design,' cried she; 'I could not have been easy to have seen Miss Wingman torn from us in this manner, especially on an occasion which could not afford her any pleasing ideas for the companions of her journey.'

Miss Wingman made many acknowledgments to them both for this kind offer, but at first refused to accept it. 'I think myself happy,' said she, 'in the testimony you give me of your good-nature and friendship towards me; but I cannot suffer you to think of leaving this place just in the height of the season, and returning to London, which is now a perfect wilderness, merely because I am obliged to go thither by a duty which I cannot dispense with.'

It is not to be supposed reasonable that this young lady was much in earnest in what she said on this score; the others, however, were too sincere to take her at her word; and it was at last agreed, that they should all set out together as soon as every thing could be got ready for their departure.

No company happening to come in, they passed the whole evening in Jenny's chamber; where the conversation turning chiefly on the communication of Lord Huntley's marriage, it suddenly came into Lady Speck's head, that it would be better for her to express her sentiments on that occasion by a letter, than by holding any discourse with a man whom she could scarce think upon with any tolerable degree of patience.

Miss Wingman approving of her intention, her ladyship took Jenny's standish, and immediately wrote to him in the following terms.

' TO LORD HUNTLEY.

' MY LORD,

' IT is with an infinity of astonishment, and little less concern, that I find your lordship's proposal of an alliance with our family, instead of

' an

‘ an honour, is the greatest affront that
 ‘ could possibly be offered to it. ‘ I
 ‘ thought my sister’s birth, fortune,
 ‘ and character, had set her above be-
 ‘ ing attempted to be made the dupe
 ‘ either of a vicious inclination or un-
 ‘ meaning gallantry; for to what else,
 ‘ than to gratify one or the other of
 ‘ these propensities, can tend the ad-
 ‘ dresses of a person who has already
 ‘ disposed of himself to another?’

‘ This, my lord, is sufficient to con-
 ‘ vince you that we are perfectly well
 ‘ acquainted with your marriage: af-
 ‘ ter which I cannot suppose you will
 ‘ even think of continuing your visits;
 ‘ the only reparation you can make for
 ‘ a proceeding so unworthy of you be-
 ‘ ing to shun, henceforward, the pre-
 ‘ sence of my much-injured sister, and
 ‘ also of all those who have any interest
 ‘ in her happiness or reputation; a-
 ‘ mong the number of whom, you can-
 ‘ not doubt, is her who is sorry to sub-
 ‘ scribe herself, my lord, your lord-
 ‘ ship’s ill-treated servant,

‘ M. SPECK.’

This, after having shewn it to Miss Wingman and Jenny for their approbation, she sent by a servant, to be left for Lord Huntley; but that nobleman coming not home till very late, could do nothing in the affair that night. Early the next morning Lady Speck received a billet from him, containing these lines.

‘ TO LADY SPECK.

‘ MADAM,

‘ I Received yours with more astonish-
 ‘ ment than you could be capable
 ‘ of feeling at the motive which in-
 ‘ duced your ladyship to write to me
 ‘ in the manner you did. So base, and
 ‘ withal so ridiculous, a calumny,
 ‘ would have merited only my con-
 ‘ tempt, had it not reached the ears of
 ‘ persons for whom I have the greatest
 ‘ reverence. Nothing is more easy than
 ‘ for me to clear my innocence in this
 ‘ matter; but, as I cannot bear to ap-
 ‘ pear, even for one moment, guilty in
 ‘ the eyes of my dear adorable Miss
 ‘ Wingman, I beg your ladyship will
 ‘ give me the opportunity of justifying
 ‘ myself by letting me know the name
 ‘ of my accuser; that villain who,

‘ while he stabs in the back, reaches
 ‘ my heart. In confidence of your
 ‘ ladyship’s generosity in this point, I
 ‘ will wait on you as soon as I am
 ‘ dressed; promising, at the same time,
 ‘ to intrude no more till this cruel af-
 ‘ fecting person is removed, and I shall be
 ‘ found to be, what I truly am, a man
 ‘ of honour; and, with the most pro-
 ‘ found respect, Madam, your lady-
 ‘ ship’s most humble and most obedient
 ‘ servant,

‘ HUNTLEY.’

The two sisters, who had imagined he would have been too much shocked at the detection of his crime to have gone about to deny it, or to excuse it, cried out, that he had an unparalleled assurance; that to behave in this manner was an aggravation of his guilt; and proved his soul as mean and abject as his principles were corrupt and base.

But Jenny, who was always ready to think the best, and, besides, had the eyes of her reason less obscured by passion, began immediately to entertain more favourable sentiments: she found something in this letter which, in spite of all the appearances against him, made her believe there was a possibility of his being wronged. She could not forbear communicating her opinion to the ladies; and urged in the defence of it these arguments.

‘ Lord Huntley is a man of sense,’ said she; ‘ and, if he was so wicked as
 ‘ to be capable of acting in the manner
 ‘ that has been represented, he could
 ‘ not be so stupidly weak as to desire a
 ‘ farther explanation of it; certainly
 ‘ he would rather be silent on that
 ‘ head: if guilty, what would his pre-
 ‘ tensions to innocence avail? His
 ‘ making any noise in relation to a fact
 ‘ which, if true, may be so plainly
 ‘ proved, would only serve to make his
 ‘ criminal designs more conspicuous,
 ‘ and expose his villainy to those who
 ‘ otherwise might hear nothing of it.’

‘ All this is very true, my dear,’ replied Lady Speck; ‘ but yet there are
 ‘ some men who have had the impu-
 ‘ dence and folly not only to court,
 ‘ but even actually marry, a second
 ‘ wife, while the former has been liv-
 ‘ ing; and perhaps, too, at less distance
 ‘ than, it is likely, Lady Huntley was
 ‘ when

‘ when he first made his addreses to my sister.’

‘ It will not enter into my head that Lord Huntley is one of these; nor can I think it quite just that a man should be absolutely condemned without a fair trial, or even knowing by whom he is accused.’

Lady Speck paused a little on these words; and then said, that, as she was certain Sir Thomas Welby would not so positively assert a thing, the truth of which he was not well assured of, she was half inclined to grant Lord Huntley’s request, though it were only the more to confound him.

Scarce had she done speaking in this manner, when her woman came into the room, and told her that Lord Huntley’s servant, who had brought the letter, and had waited all this time for an answer, begged to know if her ladyship had any commands to send by him; to which, after a short consideration, she replied—‘ Yes; he may tell his lord that I shall be at home.’

Miss Wingman had not opened her mouth during this whole debate; but now shewed, by her countenance, that she was not displeased at the result; and, it is highly probable, felt more impatience than she thought proper to express for what should pass in this important interview.

CHAP. VIII.

SERVES ONLY TO RENDER THE CAUSE MORE INTRICATE, AND INVOLVE THE PARTIES CONCERNED IN IT IN FRESH PERPLEXITIES.

LADY Speck had given orders that, when Lord Huntley came, he should be admitted, but not farther than the parlour. It would have been pleasant enough for any one to have observed the meeting of these two: he approached her with a profound reverence, but with a reserve which had something in it very near akin to resentment; she returned his salutation with an air all distant and austere; and they stood looking upon one another for the space of near half a minute without speaking.

Lady Speck was the first that broke

silence: ‘ I did not expect, my lord,’ said she, ‘ that your lordship would have given yourself the trouble of making any visits here, after what I wrote to you last night.’

‘ It is not, indeed, Madam, a thing very common with me,’ answered he, gravely, ‘ to go to any place where I have been once forbid: but I am pierced in too tender a part to stand upon punctilios; both my love and honour are wounded, gashed, mangled, in a most cruel and infamous degree; and it is only from your ladyship’s justice and humanity that I can hope a cure!’

‘ Can you deny, my lord, that you are married?’ cried she. ‘ By Heaven! not married, nor contracted!’ returned he, eagerly: ‘ nor, till I saw your charming sister, I defy the world to prove that I ever made the least proposal of that nature to any woman breathing.’ These words, and the manner in which they were delivered, began a little to stagger that belief of his infidelity which she, till now, had thought herself confirmed in. ‘ If any part of what your lordship avers be true,’ said she, ‘ Sir Thomas Welby must certainly have been imposed on by some very extraordinary methods.’

‘ Sir Thomas Welby, Madam!’ retorted Lord Huntley, in great amazement; ‘ is it then possible that he should be my accuser?’—‘ There required a no less substantial evidence,’ said she, ‘ to authorize a supposition of your lordship’s being guilty of a crime like this. But you may see what he says,’ added she, presenting him with Sir Thomas’s letter.

He read it hastily to himself; and, as soon as he had done so—‘ I perceive indeed, Madam,’ said he, ‘ that some uncommon arts have been put in practice against me; for what reason I am not able to conceive. Sir Thomas’s veracity is well known to me; and, I think, he has been inclined to favour my pretensions: I doubt not, therefore, but he will readily afford me his assistance in diving to the bottom of this mysterious villainy. I am sure I shall lose no time, nor spare no pains, to bring the dark incendiary to light. But,’ pursued he, ‘ I will trouble your ladyship no

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‘ farther,

‘farther, nor even ask to see the object of my soul’s desire, till my innocence is fully cleared, and I have proved myself less unworthy of adorning her.’

He concluded these words with a low bow, and went directly out of the room, without waiting to hear what answer she might have made to them.

It was, perhaps, much for her ease that he did so; for she was now in a consternation at his behaviour little inferior to what she felt on the first information of his crime: his words, his looks, his resolution, made a deep impression on her; she had seen grief and resentment in his countenance, but nothing that betokened a consciousness of guilt. She knew not what to think, or how to form a right judgment of him; but ran immediately to Jenny and Miss Wingman, to impart to them all that had passed, and hear their sentiments upon it.

The latter of these young ladies was afraid of giving her opinion, probably lest it should be thought too favourable; but Jenny presently cried, that she could almost lay her life upon his innocence. ‘I dare believe,’ said she, ‘that I have hit upon the real ground-work of this story: the woman who would pass for his wife is certainly no other than some cast-off mistress of his, who, either in revenge for his deserting her, or to give herself an air, assumes the name of Lady Huntley.’

‘No, no, Miss Jessamy!’ interrupted Lady Speck; ‘it is impossible that Sir Thomas would assert, in such positive terms, a thing of this nature on so slender a foundation: I know him better; and there must be something more in it than we can at present see into.’

While the ladies were in this dilemma, Lord Huntley, who, the moment he had left Lady Speck, went in search of his two friends, Sir Robert Manley and Mr. Lovegrove, was now complaining to them of the aspersion cast upon him, and declaring his resolution of going to London with all possible expedition, in order to detect the primary author of the calumny cast upon him.

These gentlemen, who had known his lordship for a considerable time, and had never heard any thing like his

having consummated a marriage, were very much surprized that so odd a story should be raised, and highly applauded his intention of justifying himself as soon as he was able.

Both of them offered to be partakers of his journey: he told them he was greatly indebted to their friendship on this score; but that he hoped he should soon return to Bath with the proofs of his innocence, and that it would be altogether needless for them to undergo the fatigue of accompanying him.

Sir Robert Manley, however, insisted on going with him. ‘As for Lovegrove,’ said he, ‘I think he stands better with Lady Speck for some days past than he had ever done before; and it would be pity to take him from her at a time when she seems to be in such favourable dispositions towards him: but, as for me, I have no mistresses, at least none that will receive my vows, and consequently can have no pleasure equal to that of proving my sincerity to my friend.—Therefore, my dear lord,’ added he, ‘if you do not suffer me to go with you in your coach, you shall not hinder me from following you on horseback.’

Lord Huntley was at last prevailed upon to take Sir Robert with him on this expedition; but, though he hoped to return triumphant from it in four or five days at farthest, he would by no means hear of Mr. Lovegrove’s leaving Bath, for ever so small a space of time, while Lady Speck continued there.

They all dined together; after which, Sir Robert and Mr. Lovegrove left Lord Huntley; the one to give directions to his man for every thing to be got ready for his departure the next morning by break of day, and the other to pay his devoirs to his mistress.

Jenny, who would not be persuaded to keep her chamber any longer, though not quite recovered enough to go abroad, was now come down into the dining-room; and Miss Wingman resolved not to appear again in any publick place while she remained at Bath, for fear of meeting Lord Huntley. Lady Speck, also, in complaisance to them both, would not go out of the house; so that Mr. Lovegrove, on his coming there, found them all at home.

The first compliments were no sooner over,

over, than the conversation began on Lord Huntley's affair. Mr. Lovegrove left nothing unsaid that he thought might contribute to make them entertain a more favourable opinion of his friend: he remonstrated to them the improbability of his being guilty in the manner he was represented; and Lady Speck and Miss Wingman, in their turn, remonstrated the improbability that such a story could be raised without some sort of foundation; but Jenny, as she had always done, sided with Mr. Lovegrove, and took the part of the accused.

They were engaged in this dispute when Sir Robert Manley came in. That gentleman, though expecting to be back in a short time, was too polite to think of going without taking his leave of the ladies: hearing what subject they were upon, he seconded Mr. Lovegrove's arguments; and so warmly defended the cause of his absent friend, that Lady Speck was obliged to cry out—'Well, well, let us have no more discourse upon this head; it is time alone that can decide the point between us: for my part, I wish his lordship may be found as innocent as you would persuade us to believe he is.'

'This is extremely generous in your ladyship,' replied Sir Robert. 'But, Madam,' continued he, addressing himself to Miss Wingman, 'how happy should I make my friend, if I were permitted to carry him the assurance that you also joined with your sister in the same kind wish!'

'Lord Huntley may be certain,' answered she, blushing, 'that I should be very sorry a crime like what is laid to his charge should be proved on any in the world, much more on a person whom I cannot deny but I once thought highly deserving of my esteem.'

There passed nothing more of any moment while they were together, which was not very long; for the gentlemen were impatient to return to Lord Huntley, who, they knew, was alone, and stood in need of all the consolation they could give him. They staid the whole evening with him, and rejoined him very early in the morning, at which time he set out with Sir Robert on his journey to London.

CHAP. IX.

HAS IN IT SOME THINGS OF NO SMALL IMPORTANCE, THOUGH AT PRESENT THEY MAY APPEAR TOO INSIGNIFICANT TO BE INSERTED.

LORD Huntley being gone, and Miss Wingman freed from all those dangers her mother apprehended for her, there seemed no necessity for that young lady's leaving Bath; yet, as she had received such positive commands to do so, and Lady waited to conduct her, she thought she could not well excuse herself from going. Jenny, who was now quite weary of the place, having lost all her relish for its pleasures, said all she could to fortify her in this resolution; and, between them both, Lady Speck was prevailed upon to think it right.

Accordingly both the sisters wrote to Lady Wingman, giving her an exact account of all that had passed in relation to Lord Huntley, and assuring her that they should throw themselves at her feet as soon as the necessary preparations could be made for their journey.

But before I proceed any farther on the particulars of these ladies adventures during the short time they had now to stay at Bath, I think it highly proper that the reader should be made fully acquainted with the several dispositions their minds were in at present.

As for Lady Speck, the late behaviour of Celandine had rendered him so despicable in her eyes, that she wondered at herself for having been able ever to endure the conversation of such a fop, and much more to have been won to a liking of his person, the graces of which she now plainly saw were chiefly owing to his milliner and taylor. Mr. Lovegrove, on the contrary, had shewn so much of the man of honour, and of the respectful lover, in what he had done, that she hesitated not a moment if she should give him the preference to all others who made their addresses to her; and if she could not as yet entirely overcome her aversion to entering a second time into the bands of marriage, she however resolved not to change her condition except in favour of him.

Miss Wingman was in a situation

very different from that of her sister. This young lady was of a humour extremely gay and volatile; she had never been at the pains of examining into the emotions of her own heart; but she now found out a secret there which had hitherto been concealed as much from herself as from the world: those alarms with which she had been agitated at first on the accusation against Lord Huntley, and the pleasure she had since felt in the assurances given her by Sir Robert Manley and Mr. Lovegrove, that it would be easy for him to prove his innocence, equally convinced her that he was not altogether so indifferent to her as she had imagined; and this it was which, perhaps, more than obedience to her mother's commands, made her so eager to return to London, where she thought she might soon be informed of the whole truth of this affair.

But poor Jenny laboured under sensations of a yet more unquiet nature: she had the confirmation of her lover's infidelity under his own hand; and whether he was guilty to the degree she had at first believed, of courting another woman upon honourable terms, yet he could not but appear extremely criminal in the attempt of purchasing the favour of one he intended only for a mistress, with the contempt of those solemn engagements he was bound in to herself.

In what other sense, indeed, was it possible for her to understand the first paragraph in that letter, which by his mistake in the superscription, had fallen into her hands? 'Here is no room for doubt,' cried she; 'the meaning is obvious and explicit; his heart renounces the obligation his father laid him under, and which his own perjured tongue a thousand times has sworn he wished no greater blessing than to fulfil.

'The ungrateful man,' continued she, 'shall find no difficulty in getting rid of me; I shall spare him the pains of seeking a pretence to break off an engagement now grown so irksome to him; nor shall I envy the woman to whom his faithless heart is next devoted. I shall always reflect on a distich I remember to have read in the works of old Michael Drayton:

"He that can falsify his vows to one,
Will be sincerely just and true to none."

Thus in some moments did she feel a kind of satisfaction in this early discovery of the inconstancy of his temper; others again representing her with the idea of what she once believed him, all that was just, generous, virtuous, and sincere, threw her into the most melancholy musings: every innocent endearment that had passed between them from their tenderest infancy till this great period, came fresh into her memory, and made her deeply regret the finding him so much unworthy either of her love or friendship.

It is certain that, besides the vivacity and flow of spirits which are generally the companions of youth and affluence of fortune, and keep affliction from seizing too forcibly on the vitals, she stood in need of all the good understanding she was endued with to enable her to sustain the shock of Jemmy's infidelity with that cheerfulness she wished to do. In spite of all her endeavours, she would sometimes fall into reveries which demanded other helps than those she received from within herself, to rouse her from them entirely. Though the natural sprightliness of Lady Speck and her sister was very much abated, in the one by the secret remorse she felt for the encouragement she had given to Celandine, and in the other by her suspense on account of Lord Huntley; yet neither of them were so taken up with their own cogitations as to neglect any thing in their power to dissipate the languor they observed in their fair friend.

But as it was Jemmy who had been the sole cause of her disquiet, so it was to him alone she was now indebted for her relief: the night before their departure she received a letter from him containing these lines.

'TO MISS JESSAMY, AT BATH.

'MY DEAR, DEAR JENNY!

'I Am so happy as just to snatch an opportunity of acquainting you that the wedding is over. I wish to Heaven that the revels for it were so too, that I might be at liberty to get away; for, besides the impatience I am in to see you, I am quite sick of the incessant noisy mirth of those who come to testify their joy on this occasion: I doubt not but they take me for the most dull, stupid fellow, in the universe; and, indeed how should it

'be

‘ be otherwise? In the midst of dancing, drinking, laughing, romping, I am absent; my heart is with you at Bath, and representing to me the more true felicities I might enjoy in your dear conversation. They tell me this hurry is to continue no longer than six days; but I think that an age; and nothing but my gratitude to my old friend, for the care he has taken of my affairs, should keep me a prisoner here for half that time. Be assured, that as soon as I can get free, I shall do little more than pass through London in my way towards you; so that if I am deprived of participating with you in the pleasures of the place you are in, I shall at least have that of conducting you home; till when, I hope, I need say nothing to convince you, that I am inviolably, and for ever, my dear Jenny’s most affectionate and devoted

‘ J. JESSAMY.

HAM-HALL.

‘ P. S. When we meet, you may expect a particular detail of what passes here, and some description of the bride, who has indeed a fine outside, but I am afraid wants a little of my dear Jenny’s understanding. Harry, however, finds no defect in her as yet, and I heartily wish, for both their sakes, he never may. Every man’s lot is not so happy as mine. Once more, my dear Jenny, adieu for a short time!’

This letter was a kind of clue to guide Jenny through the labyrinth of perplexity she had been involved in. She knew very well that one of the gentlemen, appointed by the last will and testament of Jemmy’s father for his executor and trustee, had a seat called Ham-Hall, in Bedfordshire. She had also heard that his son was about being married to a young lady of that county with a considerable fortune; she therefore easily conceived that the engagement mentioned by Jemmy in that former epistle, and which she imagined he had meant with herself, was in reality no other than being obliged to go down into the country on account of this wedding.

She immediately imparted to her two friends the letter she had received, and also gave them, at the same time, an ex-

planation of the mystery which had given her so much pain. Both of them sincerely congratulated her on the occasion, especially Miss Wingman, who took her in her arms, crying out—‘ Did not I tell you, my dear, that Mr. Jessamy was not so guilty as you imagined?’—‘ Aye,’ replied Jenny, ‘ but for all that he is not quite innocent; nor will he find me very easy to give him absolution.’

‘ If criminal in no greater matters than a transient amour,’ rejoined Lady Speck, ‘ I think you might forgive him, without putting him to the penance even of a blush by your reproaches. In good truth, we women have nothing to do with the men’s affairs in this point before marriage; and as I now begin to believe, in spite of all I have heard to the contrary, that he addresses no other woman than yourself upon honourable terms, these are but venial transgressions, which you ought to overlook till you have made him your own.’

They were discoursing in this pleasant manner when Mr. Lovegrove entered: he came to pass the evening with them, knowing their things being all packed up for their journey, they would not go abroad any more while they staid at Bath.

Talking of the hour in which they intended to set out, he said that he was extremely glad to know it, because he would give orders for a post-chaise to be ready exactly at the same time, that he might not have the mortification of being left behind them even for a moment.

Though he directed these words to the ladies in general, yet Lady Speck knew very well they were meant only to herself; and, looking on him with the most obliging air—‘ No, Mr. Lovegrove,’ said she; ‘ since you will needs be so complaisant as to accompany us, I see no occasion for your travelling in the way you mention. As your own coach is not here, and there is a vacant place in mine, I am very certain we shall all be pleased to have it so agreeably filled.’

He was so transported with this offer, that he could not restrain himself from catching hold of her hand, and kissing it with the most passionate gestures. ‘ This is a condescension, Madam,’ said he, ‘ which I never durst have

‘ have presumed to hope, much less to
 ‘ have requested; but it is the peculiar
 ‘ property of Heaven to prevent the
 ‘ petitions of it’s vassals, by blessings
 ‘ the most unexpected, as well as un-
 ‘ deserved.’

Miss Wingman and Jenny, finding they were likely to enter into a conversation which required no sharers, withdrew to a window, as if to look at something that passed in the street. How far Mr. Lovegrove improved this opportunity is not material to particularize. The reader will easily suppose, that neither that nor Lady Speck’s good-humour were thrown away upon him.

CHAP. X.

IS A DIGRESSION OF NO CONSEQUENCE TO THE HISTORY, AND MAY THEREFORE EITHER BE READ OR OMITTED AT DISCRETION.

THE sun had made but a very short progress in his diurnal course, when Lady Speck, Miss Wingman, and the amiable Jenny, accompanied by Mr. Lovegrove, set out on their journey for London, escorted by Landy and all their men-servants on horseback.

Our fair travellers soon found the advantage they had gained by the invitation given to Mr. Lovegrove; the innate satisfaction that gentleman felt on Lady Speck’s obliging behaviour towards him, diffused itself through all his air and features, and added a double vivacity to his conversation: he was all life, all gaiety, all spirits; he told a thousand diverting stories, and sung as many pretty songs; so that if they had been more inclined to seriousness than they really were, it would have been impossible for them to have indulged any melancholy reflections in his company.

The day was near passed over in this agreeable manner, when a sudden stop was put to all their pleasantries: one of the hindmost wheels of the coach flew off it’s axis, and but for the coachman’s uncommon presence of mind, in restraining the horses that same instant, some mischief might probably have ensued; all the servants immediately alighted, endeavouring to repair the da-

mage, but in vain; part of the iron-work was broke, and two spokes of the wheel had started with the shock. This accident happened about five miles from the town where they had designed to lie that night: but as there was a small village pretty near, it was judged proper to walk thither, as the only expedient in this exigence; which they did with a great deal of alacrity and cheerfulness, while the dismembered machine, though with some difficulty, was dragged after them.

The accommodation they found here was indifferent enough; but what deficiencies are there in nature or in fortune which good-humour cannot supply? The ladies laughed heartily at their pilgrimage: and Mr. Lovegrove made them all scamper about the room by attempting to wipe the dust off their shoes with his handkerchief.

In fine, their supper, their lodgings, all that to persons of less wit and more affectation would have been matters of the utmost mortification, to them served only as subjects of diversion, and occasioned pleasantries.

They arose the next morning in the same cheerful temper with which they had lain down; nor did it abate on being told that the workmen who had been sent for to mend the coach could not pretend to make it fit to take the road for several hours. As the place they were in afforded no other convenience to prosecute their journey, they resolved to make a virtue of necessity, and content themselves with what was without a remedy. Mr. Lovegrove, however, took upon himself the office of caterer, and was so fortunate as to provide an entertainment somewhat less inelegant than they had been obliged to content themselves with the night before.

But, while dinner was getting ready, an accident happened which contributed to make the time of their abode there seem the shorter, by presenting them with a new theme of conversation.

The woman who kept the house, after having gently opened the door of the room where they were, came in making a curtsy at every step she took, and approached the ladies with an—‘ I beg pardon; I hope no offence: but I have a poor guest below that would have me to come up. I am very tender hearted; though God knows what she is, or who she is; for my part, I never



‘ never saw her before last night in my whole life, so I have nothing to answer for on that account; and if she be bad, it is the worse for herself; that is all I have to say.’

‘ If you have nothing more to say, mistress,’ cried Mr. Lovegrove laughing, ‘ I think you are very much to blame to lose your time in telling us.’

— ‘ I hope your lordship’s worship and all their ladyships will excuse me; I am but a plain woman; but, God knows my heart, I mean no harm: but, as I was saying, a poor young woman finding I had quality in my house, has been baiting me this two hours, I am sure, to shew you a snuff-box she had got to sell; how she came by it, I cannot tell; but this I must say, that she does not look like a thief; though there are such sad doings in the world, that one does not know who to trust.’

‘ Let us see it, however,’ said Lady Speck. ‘ Aye, aye,’ rejoined the others; ‘ let us see it, by all means.’ On this the woman produced the box, though not without repeating several times over her former apologies.

The box was a most curious English pebble, set in gold, with a hinge and lining of the same metal; they handed it from one to the other, and concluded, that as it was a toy too genteel for the possession of a person in very abject circumstances, it must either be stolen, or the real owner be reduced by some uncommon distress to the necessity of parting with it.

‘ This,’ said she, ‘ is the young woman; she says she came very honestly by the box: as I told your honours before, I know nothing of the matter; she is quite a stranger to me, but I shall leave her with you; and if your honour and ladyships worships will be pleased to examine her, you may-hap will be better judges than I am. For my part, I have a great deal of business to do, and cannot be spared any longer from my bar and my kitchen; indeed, there is nobody but myself to take care of any thing in this house, though I have a husband, and daughter at woman’s estate, as I may say, for she is past fourteen; yet all lies upon me; so I hope your honours will excuse me.’

It may be easily imagined that all the company were very glad to get rid

of her impertinent babble, so readily dismissed her; Mr. Lovegrove telling her at the same time, with an ironical complaisance, that he was extremely troubled she had wasted so many of her important minutes on so trivial an occasion.

After this prating woman was gone, the young person she had left behind, and who had entered no farther than just within the door, on being desired to come forward, advanced with a slow and timid air, yet which had nothing in it of the appearance of a conscious guilt: notwithstanding the disguise of an old-fashioned long riding-hood, which covered her whole body, and even hid some part of her lovely face, there was still enough to be seen to prepossess any beholder in her favour.

Her extreme youth, for she seemed not to have exceeded fifteen or sixteen years at farthest, the delicacy of her complexion, and of those features which she suffered to be exposed to view, excited a kind of respectful compassion in the hearts of all those she was at present with.

Mr. Lovegrove, who had undertaken to be the speaker, began with asking her, if she was the owner of the box before them; to which she answering in the affirmative—‘ I am very sorry, then,’ said he, ‘ and I am certain that all here are so, that any exigence should oblige you to dispose of it.’

‘ The vicissitudes of fortune, Sir,’ replied she, with a becoming assurance, ‘ are too frequently experienced in the affairs of life to raise much wonder, or to know much pity, except from the hearts of a generous few.’

‘ That is true,’ resumed Mr. Lovegrove; ‘ but you are too young to have been subjected to them by any of those ways the fickle goddess ordinarily takes to shew her power over the world: the distress you labour under must therefore proceed from some uncommon source, which if you thought proper to communicate, I dare answer you are now among persons who would not only wish, but also make it their endeavour, to lessen the weight of your affliction.’

She was about to make some reply, but was prevented by Lady Speck, who immediately subjoined to what Mr. Lovegrove had said—‘ There is no thing wanting,’ cried she, ‘ but the knowledge

‘ knowledge of your affairs to make me shew my readiness to serve you.’ The other two ladies spoke much to the same purpose, especially Jenny, who had taken more than an ordinary fancy to this fair-one.

After having thanked them in the politest terms for their goodness to one so altogether a stranger to them—‘ The accidents of my life,’ said she, ‘ are little worthy the attention of this company; but since I am commanded to repeat them, I shall make no scruple to obey, on condition I may be permitted to conceal the names of all the persons concerned in them.’

They then assured her that they should content themselves with such things as she thought proper to impart; and, making her sit down, desired she would not delay one moment the satisfaction she had promised; which request she complied with, as will be seen in the succeeding chapter.

CHAP. XI.

IS A CONTINUATION OF THE SAME DIGRESSION, WHICH, HOWEVER INSIGNIFICANT IT MAY APPEAR AT PRESENT, THE READER WILL HEREAFTER, PERHAPS, BE GLAD TO TURN BACK TO THE PAGES IT CONTAINS.

THE young stranger having been made acquainted, before her coming up stairs, of the rank and condition of the persons to whom she was about to be introduced, would not suffer herself to be any farther entreated by them, but began to satisfy the curiosity she had excited in these or the like words.

‘ I am the daughter of a gentleman,’ said she, ‘ who, by living in his youth above the income of his estate, has been reduced to live below the dignity of his birth, in order that his children may not, at his decease, have too much cause to regret the situation in which they shall be left.’

‘ It is impossible for any parent to behave with greater tenderness and indulgence, or to be more sincerely anxious for the welfare of his posterity. Sensible of his former mistakes, he has often condescended to tell us, that he looks upon us as persons he has wronged, by having wasted what should have rendered

comfortable the life he gave. His affairs, however, are not on so ill a footing but that he supports his family in a genteel, though not in a grand manner; and if he lives a few years longer, it is hoped will be able to leave the estate to my brother, now a student at Cambridge, born to inherit, free from all incumbrance, except myself and a sister some years older than either of us.

‘ As for a provision for myself and sister, I have heard him say that his scheme is, as soon as my brother arrives at a proper age, to match him with some woman of fortune; which fortune should equally be divided between us two, and a settlement made for her out of the estate.

‘ He never flattered himself with the expectations of any offers of marriage to our advantage; and though he gave us all the accomplishments befitting our station in life, yet did he never encourage either of us to imagine that without money we had anything in us capable of attracting a heart worthy our acceptance.

‘ But to my great misfortune, he found himself mistaken in this point. A gentleman of a very large estate, happening to see me at a friend’s house where I sometimes visited, took an extraordinary fancy to me; and after some necessary enquiries concerning my birth, character, and circumstances, came to wait upon my father, and asked his permission to make his addresses to me; adding, at the same time, that he desired nothing but myself; and whatever fortune was intended for me might be given to my sister.

‘ This last was a prevailing argument with my father, who, dear as I believe I then was to him, would perhaps have rather suffered me to lose so advantageous a match, than have confessed his incapacity of giving me a portion.

‘ But how fatal did this act of generosity in my lover prove to me! My father, charmed with the proposal, hesitated not to comply with it, provided my consent might be obtained; which in his heart he resolved from that moment to compel me to grant, in case he should find me refractory to it.

‘ It will doubtless seem a little strange

‘to you,’ continued she, ‘that I should mention as a misfortune what you might expect a girl in my precarious situation would have rejoiced at, and been elated with, as the greatest good that could have befallen her: the world I know condemn my folly; I condemn myself; yet was it as impossible for me to act otherwise, as it is to repent of what I have done.

‘You will perhaps imagine that he is some deformed and loathsome creature, but I assure you he is not; for I must do him the justice to acknowledge, that, making an allowance for his age, which by his own account is pretty near fifty, few men can boast of having a more agreeable person; that he has also a good understanding, a great deal of ready wit, and is very facetious in conversation: but all this was insufficient to engage my affection; and I have a certain delicacy in my nature, if I may so call it, which will not permit me, on any consideration whatever, to give my hand where my heart will not go along with it.

‘The astonishment I felt on being first informed of the new conquest I had made, was succeeded by an adequate proportion of horror at being commanded by my father to receive that gentleman as the person ordained by Heaven and him to be my husband, and to look on such an alliance as the greatest blessing that could be bestowed upon me.

‘I blushed, I trembled, and had not power to make the least reply, till being urged to speak, I recollected, as well as I was able, my scattered senses; and cried, though with a broken and faltering voice, that I was too young to think of marriage; to which my father sternly answered — “Be guided, then, by those who know how to think for you;” and with these words left me to consider on what he had said.

‘The same day my lover dined with us, as I afterwards found, by the appointment of my father; who, as soon as the cloth was taken away, retired to his closet, pretending he had some letters to write, and left me to entertain this guest, or rather to be entertained by him with the declaration of his passion.

‘He made it, indeed, in the most

respectful terms: he told me, that having lost his wife in bringing a son into the world, he had resolved never to transfer the affection for her to any other woman; that he devoted near two and twenty years to her memory; that, during the whole time of his widowhood, he had never seen that face, till mine, which had the power to alienate his thoughts from the grave where she lay buried; but that he no sooner beheld me, than he felt new life and new desires rekindling in him; remembered that he was a man, born to enjoy the social delights of pure and virtuous love, and at the same time found it was with me alone he could partake them.

‘As this sort of conversation, and, indeed, every thing relative to love, was entirely new to me, I made but very awkward replies; and was so little able to express my real sentiments to him on that head, that I afterwards found he took what I said as the effects of simplicity and bashfulness, rather than any aversion either to him or his proposals.

‘My father, who, poor man! rejoiced in this opportunity of making my fortune, seemed highly pleased with the account my lover gave him of my behaviour: he told me I was a very good girl, and that he doubted not but that I should deserve the happiness Heaven was about to confer upon me. “But,” said he, “though the modesty with which I hear you receive this first declaration was very becoming in a maid of your years; yet, as we have agreed the wedding shall be consummated in a few days, I would have you grow less reserved on every visit he makes to you: accustom yourself to treat him, by degrees, with more freedom, to the end that, when you are made one, you may not be too much strangers to each other.”

‘This so frightened me, that I could not forbear crying out, with some vehemence — “Oh, Sir! I conjure you not to talk in this manner! I never can think of being married to him!”

‘The look my father gave me at these words will always be imprinted on my memory. “Never think of being married to him!” said he; “then never think I am your father;”

“ think rather of being an utter alien,
 “ an out-cast from my name and fam-
 “ ily! Think of begging, starving;
 “ of infamy, contempt, and wretched-
 “ ness!”

“ These cruel expressions coming
 “ from the mouth of a parent, who,
 “ till now, had always used me with
 “ the extremest tenderness, cut me to
 “ the very soul: I threw myself at his
 “ feet; I wept; I beseeched him to
 “ moderate his passion; and protested,
 “ as I might do with the greatest sin-
 “ cerity, that the thought of offending
 “ him was more terrible to me than
 “ that of death itself.

“ He appeared somewhat mollified
 “ with these submissions. “ Child,”
 “ said he, raising me from the posture I
 “ was in, “ you cannot be so ignorant
 “ as not to know what I do in this af-
 “ fair is wholly for your happiness;
 “ though, indeed, whenever Heaven is
 “ pleased to call me hence, it would be
 “ an infinite satisfaction to me in my
 “ dying moments that I left one of my
 “ daughters independent. — I could
 “ wish,” added he, looking towards
 “ my sister, who sat at work in the room,
 “ that she had an offer equally advan-
 “ tageous.”

“ If I had, Sir” replied she pertly, “ I
 “ should scarce be so mad or silly as to
 “ run the risque of disobliging you,
 “ and, at the same time, of ruining
 “ myself by refusing it.”

The beautiful stranger was in this part of her little history, when she found herself obliged to break off by seeing dinner brought upon the table. She would have withdrawn till the company should be more at leisure; but they insisted, in the most strenuous terms, that she would be their guest; to which, after making some few apologies, she consented.

CHAP. XII.

CONCLUDES THE DISTRESSFUL NARRATIVE.

AS the waiters were present, nothing was said, during the whole time of dinner, concerning the subject which that necessary appendix to life had interrupted; but the cloth was no sooner taken away, than the three ladies, as well as Mr. Lovegrove, testified the in-

terest they took in their fair guest's affairs by their impatience for knowing the event.

She replied to the many complaisant things they said to her with such an air and grace as convinced them, more than any thing she had related, that she had indeed been educated in the most genteel manner, and also been accustomed to converse with persons of the best fashion and greatest politeness.

But, though the discourse that passed between them, on the score of mere civility, might very well deserve a place in this work, I shall omit the repetition, as it might be apt to make the reader's attention to wander from the main point; and only say, that she prosecuted her history in the following terms.

“ My father,” said she, “ now con-
 “ descended to talk to me in the mildest,
 “ and withal in the most pathetick stile;
 “ he endeavoured to allure my young
 “ heart by enumerating and displaying
 “ the pleasures that attend on wealth
 “ and grandeur. He remonstrated to
 “ me, that the circumstances of our fa-
 “ mily would not permit his children,
 “ especially his daughters, to be direct-
 “ ed only by inclination in the article
 “ of marriage; and that, as I could
 “ find no possible objection to my lover
 “ but being somewhat too old, grati-
 “ tude for the happiness he was ready
 “ to put me in possession of might very
 “ well atone for that defect.

“ You say you cannot love this gen-
 “ tleman,” continued he; “ but, pray,
 “ what is this passion that is called love
 “ but a vain delusion, an *ignis fatuus*
 “ of the mind, that leads all that fol-
 “ low it astray? Suppose, rejecting the
 “ certain good fortune now put into
 “ your power, you should hereafter fix
 “ your fancy either on some one who
 “ has not the means of supporting you,
 “ or on one who returns not your af-
 “ fection, how truly miserable would
 “ be your state!”

“ I could find no arguments to oppose
 “ against those he urged, and could only
 “ answer with my tears; till, being bid
 “ to speak, and the command several
 “ times repeated, I at last sobbed out,
 “ that I would make use of my utmost
 “ endeavours to obey him.

“ I know not whether his menaces at
 “ first, and his persuasions afterwards,
 “ might not have made me, at that time,
 “ promise to do every thing he would
 “ have

‘ have me; but some company coming in, luckily preserved me from adding to the guilt of disobedience that of deceit.

‘ These visitors staid with us till very late; so I was relieved from any farther persecutions for that night: but the next morning, at breakfast, they were renewed; and, as I had no heart to consent, nor courage absolutely to refuse, I could only beg him to allow me a little time to bring my mind to a conformity with his will.

‘ It is certain that my aversion to this match seemed unreasonable even to myself, and I did all I could to conquer it; but my efforts to that purpose being fruitless, I set myself to consider, whether to live under the everlasting displeasure of a father whom I revered and loved, perhaps be turned out of doors by him, and exposed to poverty and contempt, or to pass my whole life in opulence with the man I hated, would be the least of evils.

‘ Oh, ladies! how impossible is it to represent what it was I felt while thus employed! To whichever of these ways I turned my thoughts, I was all horror and confusion: the present idea seemed still the worst; I was distracted, irresolute, and fluctuated between both; and all I knew of myself was, that I was wholly incapable of supporting either.

‘ To heighten my affliction, though I had many acquaintances, I had no one friend on whom I could depend for assistance or advice. My sister, who, by the rules of nature, should have pitied my distress, rather added to it by all the ways she could invent.

‘ Indeed, she never loved me; and, I have reason to believe, I owe great part of my father’s severity to her insinuations. I will tell you an incident which confirms me in that belief: it was this.

‘ The very Sunday before the misfortune I am now reciting befel me, a young gentleman happened to sit in a pew just opposite to mine: he fixed his eyes upon me with so much earnestness during the whole time of divine service, that I could not help observing him with some confusion. After we came out of church, turning my head back upon some occa-

sion, I perceived he followed me, though at a distance; but when I came near our door, the footman who attended me stepping before to knock, he advanced hastily, and came time enough to make me a profound reverence just as I was entering the house. I was a little confounded, as I had never seen him before. I returned his civility, however, and went in. My sister, who had not been at church that day, was looking out of a window, and beheld this passage: she rallied me a little upon it, and asked me who that pretty fellow was that came to the door with me. I told her the simple truth, and it passed off till we were going to-bed; when one of the maids told me, in her presence, a fine young gentleman had watched the footman as he was going on some errand, and asked him a-bundance of questions concerning me. I thought it a little strange, but said nothing; nor did my sister seem to take much notice of it.

‘ I thought little of this adventure; but found she afterwards made a handle of it, not only to possess my father with an opinion that I rejected the lover he recommended to me for the sake of one who was my own choice, but also to reproach me as having encouraged a clandestine courtship.

‘ I mention this only to shew how destitute I was of any consolation whatever; but, in the midst of perturbations which almost deprived me of my senses, an expedient started at once into my head, which flattered me with some small prospect of relief.

‘ My lover appeared to be a man who wanted neither good sense nor generosity; and I fancied that, if he knew the true state of my heart, the one would shew him the extreme madness of marrying a woman who had so utter a dislike to him; and the other make him ashamed of rendering miserable the person he pretended to love.

‘ On this foundation I built my hopes; and resolved, on his next visit, to make him thoroughly acquainted with the deplorable condition to which I was reduced by his unfortunate passion; and to beseech him to withdraw his pretensions as of his own accord, and without hinting to

“ my father that any thing in my behaviour had been the cause.

“ But, alas! I had no sooner contrived this project, than I found the impracticability of putting it into execution. My father had a closet which opened from his bed-chamber; it was, between that and the dining-room, and divided from the latter by a thin partition.

“ Good God!” continued this afflicted fair-one, “ how every thing conspired against me! My father had always kept the key of this closet himself, but had now given it to my sister; and, I soon found, for no other purpose than that she should hear from thence what passed between me and my lover, and give him an account.

“ Though I only suspected this at first, yet was certain of it when, being called down from my chamber where I lay, to receive my lover, who waited for me in the dining-room, I saw, as I crossed the stair-case, the shadow of my sister passing hastily into the very closet I have mentioned.

“ The old gentleman was in great good-humour that day; and perhaps my tears and prayers might have worked on him the effect I wished, had I not been so unhappily disappointed of making the experiment.

“ Having taken notice, I suppose, that I wore no watch, though indeed I had one, but, it being out of order, was sent some time before to be mended, he brought with him a fine repeater set round with diamonds, and begged me to accept of it. As I knew who was witness of our conversation, I durst not refuse his present, and much less talk to him in the manner I had intended.

“ I knew not then what course to take; but, at last, be thought me of employing my pen to give him that information which my tongue was deprived of all opportunity of doing: accordingly I wrote to him in this manner.

“ SIR,

“ I **T** is only in your power to save me from the worst of miseries; that of a forced marriage. My father is inexorable to my tears, and resolute to compel me to be yours; but not all his authority, your merits, nor my just sensibility of them,

“ can ever bring my heart to consent to the union you propose: in fine, I cannot love you as a husband, but shall always regard you as the best of friends, if you forego the claim paternal power has given you, and refuse that hand, the acceptance of which would infallibly make you no less wretched than myself. Consider, therefore, Sir, what it is you are about, and drive not an unhappy maid to desperation; for, be assured, I will seek relief in death rather than be yours.”

“ This I folded up; but neither sealed nor directed it, as I designed to slip it into his own hands as he should be going away from his next visit: but here again my scheme was frustrated, my father coming home before he went away, and waiting on him down stairs.

“ The ensuing day, however, I thought myself more fortunate. He came; and business calling him away somewhat before his usual hour, I followed to the dining-room, and gave him the paper, saying at the same time—“ I beseech you, Sir, to consider seriously on the contents of this, and make no mention of it to my father.”

“ He looked very much surprized, and seemed as if about to open what I gave him; but I clapped my hand hastily upon his, crying—“ For Heaven’s sake, take care what you do; this is no proper place!” And with these words turned quick into the room, to prevent any questions he might have made.

“ My heart fluttered a little at the step I had taken. Suspense is a very uneasy situation; but, as I thought it impossible that any man would venture to marry a woman who had wrote to him in the manner I had done, I grew more composed, and slept much better that night than for several preceding ones.

“ But, oh! how short-lived was my ease, and how terrible a surcharge of woe did the next day present me with! My father, who went out soon after breakfast, returned not till the cloth was laid for dinner, and then only to tell me that he had been with my lover all the morning; that every thing was concluded between them;

“ and

and that the marriage should be solemnized at our house the evening of the succeeding day.

‘ Judge, ladies, of my condition! The convict at the bar feels not more horror at the sentence of approaching fate than I did at the event which I had vainly flattered myself was far removed from me: the amazement I was in kept me for some moments in a kind of stupid silence. My father was so taken up in directing my sister what preparations she should make for this affair, that he regarded not my confusion, till grief and despair unloosed my tongue; and I cried out—“ Oh, Sir! did you not say I should have time?”

“ Time!” replied he; “ can any time be more lucky for you than this, when you are going to have the same settlement as if you brought ten thousand pounds? Your lover is so pleased with the pretty trick you played him last night, that, I believe, I might have got more for you if I had insisted upon it: but this was his own offer; and it is very well. We are going together to my lawyer’s, to order the writings.”

‘ My sister then asked him if he would not dine; to which he answered in the negative: and, after giving her some farther instructions, left us to return to his intended son-in-law, who, he said, waited for him at the chocolate-house.

‘ Dinner was presently brought in: I sat down, but could not eat a bit. My sister, who, since the death of my mother, had been housekeeper, and affected to be very notable, talked of nothing but the hurry she should be in; and what should be the first, and what should be the second, course of the wedding-supper: for though there were but two or three friends to be invited, yet my father had ordered that every thing of this dreadful ceremony should be set forth with as much elegance as possible.

‘ On my making no reply to all she said, she told me I was a fullen fool, and did not deserve my good fortune. I had no spirit to enter into any altercation with her; so flung from the table, and retired to my chamber, to vent those cruel agitations with which I was now more than ever overwhelmed.

‘ The first reflections that occurred to me were on this hated lover’s being pleased with the paper I had given him, and telling my father that I had played him a pretty trick. “ What!” cried I to myself, “ is it not enough that he neglects my complaints? Must he also insult me for them, and turn my grief into derision?”

‘ But I had no time to waste on this subject: my doom was fixed; and I must either fly or tamely submit to it. I resolved on the former, whatever should be the consequence; and now thought of nothing but the means of accomplishing it.

‘ It was not long before I determined on what course to take. I have an aunt married to a merchant at Corke; I believe she will grant me her protection. I am going, however, to make the experiment; and, if she refuses, must content myself to earn my bread either by going to service, or working at my needle.’

CHAP. XIII.

MAY PROPERLY ENOUGH COME UNDER THE DENOMINATION OF AN APPENDIX TO THE THREE LAST PRECEDING CHAPTERS, AS CONTAINING SOME THINGS WHICH OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN INSERTED IN THEM.

THE fair fugitive now thought she had related all that was expected from her; but Lady Speck, perceiving she had done speaking, prevented what any of the rest of the company would have said on that occasion, by crying hastily—‘ Madam, you have not given us an account of the manner of your escaping the misfortune you so much dreaded: we see you here, but know not by what means you are so, without which your history will be imperfect.’

‘ As I may, perhaps, have been too circumstantial in some parts of my narrative,’ replied she, ‘ I was cautious not to weary out your patience by any farther particulars of an event so little deserving your regard; but, as you are so good to afford me your attention, I shall readily make you a detail of whatever passed from the moment of my resolving to fly from
‘ my

‘ my father’s house to that of my arrival at a place where I have the honour to be so generously entertained: and I am the more glad to do it, as there is indeed one thing which, in common justice to the gentleman who made his addresses to me, I ought not to have omitted.

‘ As to my departure,’ pursued she, ‘ nothing was more easily to be accomplished. No one suspected I had any thoughts of it; so no care was taken to prevent my flight, either by confining my person, or setting any body to observe my motions: but I was willing to take such of my things as I could conveniently carry with me. This required some contrivance: there was no possibility of sending a trunk or portmanteau out of the house; therefore found I was obliged to leave every thing behind me which I could not be the porter of myself.

‘ My sister was mighty busy all that afternoon in her domestick affairs. I employed that time in looking over my wearing apparel; and made the first assortment of them I could, selecting those which I thought I could least suppose the want of. My fine laces I crammed into a handkerchief, in order to put into my pockets; and the more bulky part of my linen, with some upper-garments, I tied in two pillow-cases; and then essayed whether I could carry them on each side under my hoop-petticoat, and found I could do it very well. Certainly these vast hoops were invented chiefly for the convenience of those who carry about them what they want should be concealed!’

Not only Mr. Lovegrove, but the ladies themselves, laughed heartily at this reflection on their mode; but they would not interrupt her; and she went on.

‘ Finding I was able to walk under the burdens I had prepared, at least as far as out of sight of our house, I put them all together into a large trunk, packed up as they were, ready to march next morning; for I thought it not advisable to go that night, as lying at any house in town might endanger a discovery; and I knew that no carriage of any kind would set out before day-break.

‘ After this I had sat down and considered what more was to be done be-

fore I went away. My father, till now, had always been most indulgent to me; humoured me in every thing; and even this last act of power, cruel as it was, I knew was kindly meant; I could not therefore think of leaving him, perhaps for ever, without letting him see I had not quite forgot the reverence I owed him.

‘ I then took pen and paper, and wrote a letter to him: I cannot remember exactly the expressions I made use of, but know they were as pathetick as could be dictated by a heart overflowing, as mine was, with filial love and grief.

‘ I told him that I had exerted the whole force of my endeavours to obey him; that my reason and the insurmountable aversion I had to the match he proposed, had occasioned conflicts in my breast which life could scarce sustain; that I fled not from the presence of the best of fathers, but to avoid being guilty of a deed which would have been yet more grievous to him; begged him to forgive me, and to rest assured, that to what exigencies soever I might be reduced in this forlorn and helpless condition, nothing should tempt me to bring disgrace upon my family, or dishonour to myself.

‘ Having finished this melancholy epistle, I threw it into the drawer of a little escrutoire, designing to take it with me in the morning, and send it to my father by the penny-post: but, good God! how great was my confusion, when happening to look over some writings I have here, I know not for what reason, for I had nothing which I feared should be exposed after I was gone, one of the first things I laid my hands on was the very paper I had wrote to my lover, and thought I had given to him!

‘ I did not presently conceive how this could be. I knew I had wrote no copy, and that it was the same which I had been certain of having delivered to him; but at last I remembered, that not being able to give it to him on the day I intended, I had put it into this drawer to prevent it’s being seen by any accident; and this recollection convinced me, that, instead of a letter of complaint, he had received from me a foolish love song, though set to very good musick, which a lady of
‘ my

‘ my acquaintance had desired me to write out for her; and I thought, as I could not find it, I had dropt it from my pocket. It begins thus:

“ Dearest Damon, would you shew

“ What a faithful man can do,

“ Love me ever,

“ Leave me never.”

She was proceeding, but Mr. Lovegrove was so highly diverted with this incident, that he could not forbear interrupting her. ‘ By heavens, Madam,’ said he, ‘ it would have been cruel in you to have made us lose so agreeable a part of your history!’

The ladies expressed themselves in much the same manner. ‘ I cannot help laughing,’ cried Lady Speck, ‘ to think of the old gentleman’s transports on receiving so fond a remonstrance from his young mistress.’— ‘ Nor I,’ subjoined Miss Wingman, ‘ at the idea how much he must be mortified when he found himself deceived.’— ‘ For my part,’ said Jenny, in a more serious air, ‘ I pity the poor man, and am heartily sorry for the lady, who, but for this mistake, might not, perhaps, have been driven to the necessity of quitting her father’s house.’

‘ It is utterly impossible, Madam,’ replied the other, resuming the thread of her discourse, ‘ to know what would have happened, had this not been the case. I was, however, so much shocked at the thoughts of what I had done, that I resolved to let him continue in his error no longer than I had it in my power to convince him of it. To this end I enclosed the letter I had designed for him in another piece of paper, in which I wrote, I think, to this effect:

“ SIR,

“ THE silly paper, which by mistake I put into your hands, must certainly have given you a very odd opinion both of my understanding and sincerity.

“ This will, however, undeceive you as to the latter, by shewing you I meant not to disguise the true situation of my heart, which had you sooner known, perhaps I might not have been the wretch I am: but it is now too late; and all the hopes I flat-

tered myself with from your generosity and compassion are vanished into air.

“ Yes, Sir, the agreement made between my father and yourself drives me from all I once thought happiness; but beg you to believe that I shall always retain a grateful sense of the advantages offered me by your love, how miserable soever it has made me; and shall never cease to wish you may longer enjoy all those blessings in life which cruel destiny denies any part of to

“ The forlorn, &c.”

‘ To this,’ continued she, ‘ I added a postscript, to let him know that I left behind me the watch which he had been so good to present me with, and doubted not but my father would return it to him as soon as my flight should be discovered.

‘ Having dispatched all that I thought necessary for my going, my mind for some moments was as easy and composed as if the preparations I had been making were only for a journey of pleasure; but, alas! the sad occasion soon recoiled upon me, and filled me with most gloomy apprehensions.

‘ My father came home in the evening in so jocular a humour as hindered him from observing that melancholy which I could not else have been able to hide from him: he had, indeed, been drinking more freely than he was accustomed; and I found also by what he said, that my lover, by toasting my health too plentifully, had rendered himself incapable of waiting on me that night.

‘ Nothing material happened afterwards to the time of my elopement, which every thing seemed to favour; my sister went very early in the morning to Covent Garden to buy fruit for the dessert, taking one of the men with her to bring home what purchases she made; the other was busy in cleaning the plate; all the maids were in the kitchen, and my father was yet in bed: so the coast being entirely clear, I tied my panniers to my sides, stuffed my pockets with as much as they would contain, and went directly out of the house without being seen by any body; though I believe whoever had met me would not have guessed in what manner I was equipped.

‘ped. I made all the haste I could out of the street, however; stepped into the first hackney-coach I found, and drove to a place where I remembered to have seen second-hand cloaths hung up for sale; there I bought this riding-hood, which I thought would be some kind of a disguise.

‘Bristol being just opposite to that part of Ireland where my aunt lives, I had no other route to take; but, in the hurry of my thoughts, had never once considered that as I had secured no place in the stage-coach, it was a thousand against one if there would be any room for me in it this season of the year.

‘I did not forget, however, in my way to the inn, to put the letters I had wrote to my father and lover into the penny-post; but found, when I came there, the coach was not only full, but had set out above an hour before. This put me into great perplexity; but I was now embarked on an expedition, and must go through it some how or other. The Windfor stage was just going out, and had a place, which I gladly filled, in order to be so far on my journey.

‘On my arrival there, I was at as great a loss as before; but being told that if I hired a chaise to Maidenhead, I might possibly find a place in some one or other of the coaches that put in there, I took this advice; but would not lie in that town, lest I should be seen by some persons of my acquaintance that lived there; so drove on to this village, which I thought would answer my purpose as well, as I should catch the coaches as they passed by this morning. I got up very early, that I might be ready for the first; for it was indifferent to me in which I went, provided they took the road I wanted to go; but my hopes deceived me; every one that came this way was full.

‘But this was not the only, nor the worst disappointment I met with at this place. Having laid out what loose money I had about me, I thought to have recourse to my purse; in which, besides sufficient to defray the expences of my journey, there was a diamond-ring which had been my mother’s, and a medal which I set a high value upon: not finding it presently, I was very much alarmed. I

‘pulled every thing out of my pockets that were in them, but the examination only served to convince me that what I sought was lost. I know not how this accident happened, nor is it of any importance.

‘It is easy to conceive how terrible a misfortune this was to a person in my present circumstances. I should have been driven to the last despair, if a thought had not occurred to me, that the little box I took the liberty of sending by the woman of the house might be acceptable to some one or other of this company.’

Here ended all she had to say; but the conclusion was accompanied with some tears, which, notwithstanding robbed the eyes from which they fell of no part of their lustre.

C H A P. XIV.

CONTAINS MUCH MATTER FOR EDIFICATION, BUT VERY LITTLE FOR ENTERTAINMENT.

THE distressed of a beautiful person have a double influence over the heart. Those misfortunes which the dignity of our nature oblige us to commiserate, excite a more kindly warmth, a more interested concern, in proportion to the loveliness of the object we see labouring under them.

There was something in the air and whole behaviour of this young stranger, which, joined to the calamity of her present condition, had a kind of magnetick force, capable of attracting both respect and compassion in minds less generous and gentle than those of the company she now was with.

They thanked her for the pleasure she had given them in the recital of her adventures, and at the same time testified the most affectionate concern for the event.

Each having expressed some part of their sentiments on this occasion, Lady Speck drew her sister and Jenny aside, and, after a short whisper between themselves, all returned to their seats; and the former addressing herself to their unfortunate guest, spoke in this manner:

‘We cannot think, Madam,’ said she, ‘of depriving you of a thing which an unforeseen necessity has obliged

‘obliged you to expose to sale; but if you please to receive a small contribution in lieu of a purchase, we shall take your acceptance as a favour done to ourselves.’

With these words her ladyship put six guineas into her hand, which she took, bowed, and blushed; though not half so much as Jenny did, who was extremely scandalized at the meanness of the present, though she did not think proper to discover her opinion of it at that time.

On this Mr. Lovegrove, who doubts had his own reflections, cried hastily out—‘Then, ladies, since you will not buy the box, I will; I have a mind to make a present of it to a lady.’—‘I protest I will not have it,’ said Lady Speck. ‘Nor I,’ rejoined Miss Wingman. ‘Nor I,’ cried Jenny. ‘You need not be under this agitation, ladies,’ replied he, smiling; ‘for, I assure you, it neither was nor is my intention to make an offering of it to any of you.’

They all looked a little grave at hearing him speak in this manner, but said nothing; while he counted ten guineas out of his purse, and presented them to the fair fugitive with one hand, and with the other, in the same moment, took up the snuff-box, which had all this time lain on a side-board near which he sat. ‘This, Madam,’ said he, ‘is an equivalent, I believe.’

He then put the box into his pocket with a very serious air; but immediately taking it out again, laid it into the lap of the owner. ‘You are the only person, Madam,’ said he, ‘to whom I ought to make this present: be pleased to accept it as a token of my sincere respect for a lady who at your years can have behaved with so much fortitude and resolution.’

All the ladies were highly pleased at the gallant turn he had given to this affair; but the obliged person was so much overwhelmed with the sense she had of such an unexpected act of generosity, that she was able to express her gratitude only in broken and disjointed phrases; which, notwithstanding, Mr. Lovegrove would not suffer her to go on with; but asked her in what manner she now intended to prosecute her journey.

She replied, that as there was no wheel-carriage to be procured in that

village, she had thoughts of taking a man and horse to conduct her as far as Reading, where she was informed she might be sure of being better accommodated.

Though Mr. Lovegrove had no other view in this question than merely to turn the discourse, it proved a very fortunate one for the young traveller: on hearing the answer she made—‘You need not,’ said Lady Speck, ‘be at the pains or expence of hiring a man and horse, as we have enough of both standing idle. I doubt not but the woman of the house will readily provide a pillion; and you may ride behind one of my servants.’

This offer being too convenient, as well as obliging, not to be joyfully accepted, the lady immediately called for one of her servants, and gave him orders to do as she had said; adding withal, that when they came to Reading he should use his endeavours to assist the young lady he carried in getting a post-chaise for her to pursue her journey.

A very little time served for the execution of this command; and after the most becoming retributions on the one side, and sincere good wishes on the other, the fair stranger took her leave of a company among whom she had been so providentially thrown in a time of such distress.

Jenny, who had her head and heart a good deal taken up with what had passed, followed her down stairs; and making her step into a little room where they could not be overheard, surprized her with these words.

‘I cannot express,’ said she, with the greatest sweetness in her voice and looks, ‘how deeply I have been touched with your misfortunes, nor how much ashamed I am of the slender contribution made for your relief. Lady Speck is very good; and I never was more amazed than to hear her mention so pitiful a sum as two guineas a-piece; but as it was agreed to by her sister, I could not well oppose it without giving offence: I shall, however, never be able to remember this affair without blushing, if you do not allow me to make up some part of the deficiency.’

She accompanied the latter part of this speech with a present of five guineas, which the other shewed great unwillingness to accept; saying, she was

already overloaded with favours, and what she had received was more than sufficient for all the purposes she wanted: but Jenny told her, that she knew not what accidents might happen to a person at such a distance from her friends; and, in fine, forced her to take it; then, after giving her a most cordial embrace, left her, and returned to the company, without taking any notice of the occasion of her leaving them.

She found them animadverting on this adventure, which doubtless had something pretty extraordinary in it. Lady Speck was just saying how lucky a thing it was for the young stranger that she happened to come into the same inn where they were. 'It was so, indeed,' replied Jenny; 'and I think no less fortunate for us also, as the sight of her distress has given us an opportunity of doing what every one ought to rejoice in having the power to do.'

'Nothing can be more just, Madam, than this reflection of yours,' said Mr. Lovegrove; 'but I am sorry to have observed, that there are too many who have greatly the power without being blessed with the will to do the least good office: others again, who, though of a more beneficent disposition, confine their bounties within the narrow compass of their own acquaintance. Distress is not distress with them, unless the person who labours under it be known to them; forgetting that all mankind are but one family, descended originally from the same parents; that every individual is a branch from the same stock, and consequently have a kindred right to the protection of each other.'

'I was an ear witness not long ago,' continued he, 'of a very severe as well as genteel reprimand given to a peer of the first rank by a person in great distress, who had petitioned his lordship for relief, and to whom he sent for answer, that he knew nothing of him, and that he never gave any thing to strangers; on this the unfortunate person replied to him that delivered the message—"Then tell your lord that he will never relieve an angel."'

This worthy gentleman would perhaps have farther expatiated on the beauties of a mind extensively benevolent, if they had not been interrupted by

Landy, who came up to acquaint them the necessary repairs of the coach were now entirely finished. On hearing this, as there were yet some hours of daylight, they all agreed to go to Maidenhead that night; not only because they were sure of meeting with better accommodation than they had found here, but also for the sake of being so much the farther on their journey.

Every thing being got ready with all imaginable expedition, they departed from that village, where Lady Speck left orders that the servant who had been sent to conduct the young stranger should refresh himself there that night, and follow them early the next morning to Maidenhead.

CHAP. XV.

CANNOT FAIL OF GIVING AN AGREEABLE SENSATION TO EVERY HONEST AND GOOD-NATURED READER.

MISS Wingman, who, besides the natural affection she had for a mother who tenderly loved her, had always been bred in the strictest principles of duty and obedience to her, could not keep herself from being a little uneasy at the delay that had happened in their journey, fearing that indulgent parent might be under some apprehensions of her being detained by a worse accident than the real one, a day longer than she expected.

To relieve her as soon as possible, however, from the anxieties she might be under on this score, she made Landy, instead of stopping with them at Maidenhead, proceed directly, and with all the speed he could, towards London: the honest steward knowing his old lady's temper, was glad to be charged with this commission, assured the young one, that, as far as the day was advanced, he doubted not but he should be able to reach Windsor that night; and from thence, setting out early the next morning, carry Lady Wingman the joyful news of their approach several hours before the coach could possibly arrive.

This filial observance, in a young lady of Miss Wingman's gay and volatile disposition, appeared extremely amiable in the eyes both of Jenny and

Mr.

Mr. Lovegrove; but I will not trouble the reader with any repetition of the many compliments they made to her upon the occasion, things of much greater moment requiring to be discussed.

Nothing worthy of obtaining a place in this history happening at present, I shall only say, they all came to Maidenhead perfectly well pleased with the change of their quarters; and that Mr. Lovegrove, to whose direction every thing was left, took care they should be made full amends that evening for the bad entertainment of the preceding one.

The servant, who had been sent to attend the fair fugitive, returned, according to the orders he had received, very early in the morning, and brought an account, that he had been so fortunate as to procure a handsome post-chaise for her, which was to carry her quite to Bristol.

Mr. Lovegrove, Jenny, and Miss Wingman, were all up and dressed; the equipage was ready: but Lady Speck, who loved to travel at her ease, not rising before her usual hour, they did not set out so soon as some of the company, her sister in particular, were impatient to do.

Notwithstanding this, the high metal of the horses, and skill of the conductor, brought them to London pretty early in the afternoon. Lady Speck, who thought herself under an indispensable duty of waiting on her mother before she went home, prevailed on Jenny and Mr. Lovegrove to accompany them; so the coachman was ordered to drive directly thither.

It cannot be doubted but that the good old lady received her two daughters with all the demonstrations of affection imaginable, and those they brought with them with the greatest complaisance; but after the first salutations were over—'I am sorry,' said she, turning to Lady Speck, 'that what I wrote to Kitty has made you and Miss Jessamy quit the pleasures of Bath, so much sooner than I believe either of you intended.'

'I am sorry, Madam,' replied she, 'for the occasion of your ladyship's writing in that manner.'—'So am not I,' cried a voice well known to all that were present; and immediately Lord Huntley, followed by Sir Tho-

mas Welby, rushed from an inner room, where they had withdrawn on the ladies coming up. 'The late cloud,' continued Lord Huntley, 'cast upon my honour, I hope will only serve to render it more bright in the eyes of those to whom I most desire it should be conspicuous.'

He then paid his compliments to each of the ladies, one after another, who were all of them so astonished at the sight of him, that they had not the power of uttering one word: this scene, in effect was so pleasant, that Sir Thomas Welby laughed till his sides shook; and Lady Wingman, in spite of her gravity, could not forbear smiling.

As Lord Huntley advanced to embrace Mr. Lovegrove—'I congratulate you, my lord,' said that gentleman; 'I congratulate you, since there needs no other proof than seeing your lordship here, to assure me that your innocence is fully cleared.'

'Aye, aye,' cried Sir Thomas Welby; 'all this bustle has happened through my foolish mistake: and I am glad that, besides my fair charge and her mother, here are so many witnesses of my acknowledging it.'

'Sir Thomas,' replied Lord Huntley, 'you have so well atoned for representing me more unworthy than I really am, or can be, by the promise you have given me of using your interest to make me more happy than I can ever deserve to be, that I have reason to bless an error so propitious to my hopes.'

'The event, I perceive, has proved fortunate enough,' said Lady Speck; 'but, methinks, I should be glad to know how it came about to be so, and by what means Sir Thomas was so strangely deceived.'

'Strangely indeed, Madam!' answered he; 'I am ashamed to think of it: but have a little patience, and you shall be fully acquainted with all the particulars of this very foolish affair; it is a penance I have enjoined myself, for my weakness in so rashly giving credit to appearances.'

The company now seated themselves, which before they had not done; and Sir Thomas, on seeing the three young ladies and Mr. Lovegrove prepared to give their attention to what he had to deliver, began the recital he had promised, in these or the like words.

‘Happening to call,’ said he, ‘at the house of an honest tradesman with whom I have been long acquainted, I was a little surprized, on passing through his shop, to hear a person who came in just after me, enquire if Lord Huntley or his lady were at home.

‘I staid not to hear what answer was given to the man, but went directly to my friend, whom I saw sitting in his counting-house: the first question I asked him was, what lodgers he had in the house? To which he replied, that at present he had the honour of having Lord and Lady Huntley, of the kingdom of Ireland; but should not long be so happy, for they had taken a great house in the New Buildings, and only waited till their furniture, which was on the road from West-Chester, should arrive.

‘The consternation I was in made me put a great many interrogations to him, some of which I believe were impertinent enough; but he had the good manners, however, to answer succinctly to every thing I asked, according to the best of his knowledge. He told me, that Lord Huntley had been in England some time before his lady; that he had staid but two nights with her in these lodgings before he went out of town, and would not return till his house should be quite compleated, and fit for his reception, leaving the care of every thing to her ladyship and the steward.

‘He also added, that hearing they intended to furnish one apartment entirely new, he had recommended an upholsterer and cabinet-maker to them for that purpose, and hoped he should have an opportunity of obliging several others of his friends and neighbours, by helping them to the custom of this noble lord.

‘As he is of a very communicative disposition, he ran on, of his own accord, with several other particulars; to which, indeed, I did not give much attention, thinking myself thoroughly convinced in the main point, that of Lord Huntley’s being a married man.

‘But notwithstanding all he said served to corroborate that belief in me, I was willing to be still more confirmed; which I thought I might

be, by seeing and speaking to the lady herself.

‘Accordingly I told my friend, that I was well acquainted with Lord Huntley, though I had not till now heard of his marriage; but that, since it was so, and the thing seemed to be no secret, I should be glad to pay my compliments to her ladyship on that occasion.

‘To this he replied, that she was the best-humoured woman in the world, and he was sure would take it very kindly. “Yonder is the steward,” cried he; “I will let him know your intentions.” In speaking these words, and without waiting to hear what I would say, he beckoned to a person who was that moment coming into the house: presently the worst countenanced man I ever saw, on my signifying to him my desire of waiting on Lady Huntley, answered with a great deal of civility, that he would see if her ladyship was at leisure to receive the honour of my visit.

‘I forgot to send up my name, which blunder occasioned him to come down again to ask it. I made no scruple to inform him who I was, with this addition, of being one of Lord Huntley’s friends: he went up again, but staid much longer above the second time than he had done the first; at last, however, he returned with leave for my admission.

‘I followed my conductor, who introduced me to the presence of a very lovely woman indeed, though she had somewhat of a downcast look in her eyes; which, as well as a good deal of hesitation in her voice in receiving me, I at that time imputed to her modesty, on finding herself accosted by a stranger; but have since found more proper causes to ascribe it to, those of guilt and fear.

‘When the first compliments were passed, I took the liberty of asking her to what part of the country my lord had retired. She seemed in more confusion than before at this question, which then gave me some surprize; but on reflecting afterwards upon it, I easily found it had proceeded from her want of being prepared with an answer. I was, however, so inconsiderate as to furnish
her

her with one, by mentioning Bath ; on which she presently cried out—
 “ Yes, Sir ; my lord is gone to Bath with some persons of quality, his relations.”

‘ Having satisfied my curiosity with the sight of this fine lady, I took a pretty hasty leave of her, and went directly to Lady Wingman, to whom I was impatient to communicate the discovery which, I thought, had been so providentially thrown in my way.

‘ Her ladyship, as may easily be supposed, was both amazed and troubled ; but the result of our conversation was to write immediately to Miss Wingman, and apprise her of the danger we imagined she was in from the addresses of a married man. My lady would needs send Lady with these dispatches, in order to enforce the contents, and to conduct her daughter up to London.

‘ I need not tell you the satisfaction Miss Wingman’s letter gave us. Her ladyship was now perfectly easy ; and I gave myself no farther pains to enquire after Lord and Lady Huntley. Happening, however, to meet my friend one day by accident, he told me that his lordship was expected in town every hour, and that all was ready for their going into their house ; so that he should soon lose his lodgers.

‘ Things were in this position, when I was told one morning, soon after I was out of bed, that Lord Huntley, and a gentleman he had brought with him, were below, and desired to speak with me. I think I was not more astonished on hearing he was married, than I was at his making me a visit. I ran down, notwithstanding, to receive him ; but more hastened by the perplexity I was in than by any respect I had for him at that time.

‘ Indeed, my lord,’ continued Sir Thomas, addressing himself to Lord Huntley, ‘ I can never too much admire your lordship’s moderation in behaving towards me as you did, after knowing what I had wrote concerning you to Miss Wingman.’—
 ‘ Oh, Sir Thomas !’ replied that nobleman, ‘ I reserved all my fire for those who I supposed had traduced me to you, and created me an enemy out of my best friend.’

Sir Thomas was about to make some return to what Lord Huntley had said ;

but the ladies cried out, that they were impatient for the catastrophe of this adventure, and desired he would give a truce to compliments, and pursue the thread of his discourse : on which he told them they should be obeyed ; and went on thus.

‘ What I have farther to relate,’ said he, ‘ will be contained in a very short compass. My lord and I soon came to an éclaircissement : his lordship repeated to me the heads of my letter to Miss Wingman ; and I gave him a faithful account of the reasons on which my accusation was founded. He requested me to use my endeavours to shew him the villain that had usurped his name. I readily complied ; and attended his lordship and his friend, who, I afterwards found, was Sir Robert Manley, to the house where the supposed Lord Huntley and his lady lodged.

‘ My honest friend was luckily at home ; but, on my desiring to speak with Lord or Lady Huntley, he told me they had left him two days before, and were gone to their new house : on which I asked him if he knew Lord Huntley when he saw him ? “ Yes, certainly !” replied he, somewhat surprized at the question. “ Am I the person,” cried Lord Huntley, stepping forward, “ that lodged with you, and bore the name of Lord Huntley ?”—“ No, Sir,” answered he ; “ nor has he any thing of your resemblance.”—“ Then,” said I, “ you have been imposed upon ; it is well if not cheated too : for, I assure you, this is the real Lord Huntley ; and him you have had with you must be an impostor.”

‘ Never were horror and amazement more strongly painted than in the face of this poor tradesman. “ Then I am undone !” cried he. “ I do not mean for what I shall lose myself, though it is no trifle ; but I have drawn in several of my friends to give them credit.” He then proceeded to inform us that they had taken up plate, jewels, household furniture, and wearing apparel, to a considerable amount ; and all through his recommendation. We pitied his distress, comforted him the best we could, and told him that, as the affair was so recent, it was to be hoped their things might be recovered.

‘ Lord

‘ Lord Huntley’s honour was now fully cleared; but he could not be content without condign punishment being inflicted on the villain who had assumed his name and character for purposes so infamous and base. The defrauded tradesmen were all sent for on this occasion; and, as it could not be imagined that the pretended Lord Huntley would either stay long in this town, or venture to appear to any stranger while in it, the best expedient that offered was to get a search-warrant to force open the doors of his new habitation; by which means he would not only be apprehended, but also such part of the goods he had taken up, which were not yet embezzled, might be restored to the proper owners.

‘ A warrant was easily obtained on the oath of the several tradesmen, who all went with Lord Huntley, Sir Robert Manley, and myself, to see it put in execution by the officers of justice; but, to our great disappointment, the impostor was flown, with the whole gang belonging to him, both male and female. Upon enquiry among the neighbours, we found they had been there but one night; which time, it may be supposed, they had spent in packing up and carrying off goods they had brought in. The house, indeed, is conveniently situated for such a purpose, there being a back-door through the stables into another street.’

Here Sir Thomas Welby ended his little narrative: what was said upon it will be part of the subject of the succeeding chapter.

C H A P. XVI.

TREATS OF MORE THINGS THAN ONE.

AFTER thanking Sir Thomas Welby for the trouble he had given himself in satisfying their curiosity, and congratulating Lord Huntley on the ease he had found in removing the aspersion cast upon him, this amiable company began to enquire what methods had been taken to find out where the impostor and his associates had concealed themselves, in order that they might be brought to justice.

Lord Huntley replied, that nothing had been left undone for that purpose; that not only all the suspected places in London had been searched, but also letters sent to all those ports in the kingdom which opened either towards France, Holland, or Ireland, with a description of their persons, and affidavits of the frauds they had been guilty of; but that all this had been of no effect: so that those wretches, if they took any of those routes, must have escaped before the intelligence arrived.

‘ I cannot but confess,’ said Mr. Lovegrove, ‘ that the impostor shewed a good deal of address in the management of this affair; for, as he had assumed the character of a nobleman whose person, he must needs believe, was well known, he took care not to be seen by any one but the master of the house where the scene of his villainy was to be transacted, and even by him but just enough to give him room to say he had such a one for his lodger.’

‘ It certainly requires abundance both of courage and policy to form a complete villain,’ said Lady Wingman; ‘ and I have often wondered that men, endued with such great talents, should not rather employ them for ends more laudable, as well as more safe, for themselves.’

‘ All good qualities, Madam,’ replied Mr. Lovegrove, ‘ lose their very nature when accompanied with a vicious disposition. Some men are born with such an unhappy propensity, such an innate love of wickedness, that they will do nothing at all unless they can do mischief: it is in that alone they are capable of exerting the talents they are possessed of. Nothing is more frequent than for a lawyer, who might make a very good figure in a just cause, to chuse to engage himself only in those which require chicanery and artifice; nor for a soldier drummed out of his regiment for cowardice, to become a most bold and hardened villain in robbing on the highway.’

‘ Yet there is a way to correct this propensity you talk of,’ cried Lady Speck; ‘ otherwise vice would rather be a misfortune than a fault, and consequently deserve less blame than pity.’

‘ Doubtless, Madam,’ answered Mr. Lovegrove;

Lovegrove; 'but it must be done in the most early years of life, and requires more pains than either tutor or pupil are sometimes inclined to take.'

This gentleman would, perhaps, have gone on with some discourse concerning the mistakes of education, and the little care that is too generally taken in giving a right bent to the minds of youth, which might have been of very great service to many of my readers, if it had not been prevented by the sudden entrance of Sir Robert Manley; on which the conversation immediately turned on other subjects.

The trusty Landy, according to his promise, having reached London pretty early that morning, Lady Wingman took it into her head to surprize her daughters with the sight of Lord Huntley in a place where they could so little expect to find him; and willing also that their common friends should be witnesses of this meeting, made an invitation, at the same time, to Sir Thomas Welby and Sir Robert Manley; but the latter of these gentlemen not being at home when the message was delivered, heard not of it till some hours afterwards, which was the cause that he came not with the others.

Welcomes, congratulations, and all the compliments befitting the present occasion, were now renewed; after which—'What I have lost,' said Sir Robert Manley, 'by not being here before, will, I hope, be made up by the company by the intelligence I bring.—You know, my lord,' continued he, turning to Lord Huntley, 'that we met Celandine in the Park yesterday?'

'Yes,' replied that nobleman, laughing; 'he was all alert and gay, talking to some ladies, when we met him: but I shall never forget how his countenance changed on perceiving us, and how silly and sheepish he looked as we passed by him!'

'The secret of his doing so,' resumed Sir Robert, 'is easy to guess. The sight of us two, doubtless, made him imagine that the terrible Mr. Lovegrove was also in town; for I have just now heard that he has packed up all his fardles of fopperies, and is gone this very morning to make a second tour, and display them to the best advan-

tage he can among his brethren, the petit-maitres.'

'What! gone to Paris?' cried Mr. Lovegrove. 'Aye, verily!' replied the other: 'his diamond tassel now ceases to sparkle in St. James's sun, and his musk and amber to perfume the Mall. Your dreadful idea has driven hence the hero of the mode—'

"To the great grief of many a charming toast,
"Who sighs and mourns her dear Pulvilio
"lost!"

'Fye upon you, Sir Robert!' said Miss Wingman, giving him a slap over the shoulder with her fan; 'I cannot have so mean an opinion of my sex as to believe that there is even one woman in the world that will regret the absence of such a coxcomb.'

'Yes, sister,' rejoined Lady Speck, 'just as one would regret the loss of a squirrel or a monkey, who has diverted one with its tricks; for, I dare answer, no woman ever considered him in any other light.'

'Perhaps not, Madam,' said Lord Huntley; 'but as the animals you mention are sometimes very mischievous, so there may be danger in encouraging the follies of Celandine, which every one is not aware of. There is a certain young lady in this town, by some cried up for one of the greatest beauties in it, who has received a wound in her reputation, which will not easily be healed, on account of her acquaintance with him.'

'I know who your lordship means,' cried Jenny, who was always ready to take part with the absent; 'but dare believe that, whoever censures her for having the least tendre for that unworthy trifler, does her a great deal of injustice. It is true, he has had the impudence and vanity to follow her to all publick places, and even to take some liberty in company, which her excess of good-nature kept her from resenting so much as, perhaps, she ought to have done: yet, in spite of these appearances, I think I may be pretty positive that she heartily hates and despises him.'

Mr. Lovegrove, who, in all probability, had more concern in this discourse than any one of the company, except

except Lady Speck, joined not in it; but affected to be wholly unattentive during the time it lasted, and seemed taken up with admiring a fine gold-headed cane Sir Thomas Welby had in his hand.

The good baronet, who had all this while been silent, as knowing nothing either of Celandine or the lady mentioned by Lord Huntley, could not now, on hearing what Jenny said, forbear testifying his admiration of her generosity in expressions no less polite than they were sincere.

'It is no new thing, Sir Thomas,' said Mr. Lovegrove, 'to hear Miss Jessamy plead the cause of the accused: strong as was the indictment laid against Lord Huntley in your letter, I can assure you it lost half its force by the arguments which this fair advocate urged in opposition to it; scarce could the supposed criminal himself have defended his innocence with more zeal, or in terms more pathetic and efficacious.'

It cannot be doubted but that Lord Huntley made the most grateful acknowledgments to that young lady, on being told the part she had taken in his justification. 'But how, Madam,' said he to her, 'did my charming judge receive the pleas you were so good to offer in my behalf?'

'Oh, my lord,' answered she with a smile, 'this is not a fair question; a barrister, you know, never pretends to dive into the sentiments of the court.' He then was about to address something to Miss Wingman, who seemed in a good deal of confusion at this discourse; but her blushes were instantly relieved by the butler coming in to tell Lady Wingman that supper was on the table; on which they all adjourned into the next room, and sat down to partake of a very elegant collation, which that lady had prepared for their entertainment.

What passed during the time of eating would be superfluous to repeat; so I shall only say, that soon after the cloth was taken away, Lady Speck, knowing her mother went early to bed, made a motion to retire, and by doing so, engaged the company to break up, to the no small satisfaction of Jenny, who was impatient to get home, for reasons which will presently appear.

CH A P. XVII.

AFFORDS FRESH MATTER TO EMPLOY THE SPECULATION OF EVERY CURIOUS READER.

BY Jemmy's letter from Ham-Hall, Jenny found that the time which he proposed to continue there was elapsed; and therefore doubting not but that he was now in town, sent her servant the minute she came home, to acquaint him with her arrival; but she was a good deal surprized when the return of the messenger informed her, that after staying but two nights in London, he had set out the very day before for Bath.

The gall of this disappointment had an equal portion of sweetness mingled with it: if she was vexed at not being able to see him so soon as she had expected, she was no less pleased on the haste he had made to go to Bath, as she knew he could have no reason to imagine she as yet had left that place.

This being a new proof of the sincerity of his affection towards her, very much abated her impatience to reproach him with the less honourable addresses he had made elsewhere; and she sometimes even doubted within herself, whether she ought ever to give him any shock upon that score.

When the suspicion of an enormous injury is once removed, all lesser ones decrease in magnitude, and seem less deserving our resentment than they really are. Jenny believing her lover innocent, as to the main point, began now to think little of any thing else he might be guilty of.

The good-humour she was in at present with him rendered her mind quite composed: but the time was not arrived when she was to remain in any settled state of tranquillity; a letter was brought to her by a person who refused to say either from whom or from whence he came. It contained these lines;

'TO MISS JESSAMY.

'MADAM,
'**T**HE high character I have heard
'of your good-nature and com-
'plaisance makes me not doubt but you
'are endowed with an equal share of
'justice

‘ justice and generosity, especially when these noble virtues are to be exerted in favour of a person of your own sex; and in that confidence take the liberty of entreating you will set me right in an affair on which the whole happiness of my life depends, and which none but yourself can clear up from it’s present ambiguity.

‘ I have for a considerable time received the most passionate addresses of a gentleman whom, I very well know, the world once looked upon as destined to be yours: he has gained my friends consent, and, by his merits and assiduities, so great an ascendant over me, that nothing hitherto has hindered me from accepting his hand, but the fears that in doing so I should be accessory to his being guilty of an irreparable injury to you.

‘ After all this, it may perhaps be needless to tell you, that I mean Mr. Jessamy; but as my circumstances require a plain and categorical answer from you on this head, it behoves me to express myself in terms which will admit no room to doubt their meaning: it is, indeed, Madam, no other than he whom I love, and by whom I am equally beloved; and who, while he confesses a former engagement with you, protests at the same time, and with the same seeming sincerity at least, that it is now entirely broken off, and that he is at full liberty to dispose of his person where he has given his heart.

‘ But I have been told, by people more experienced than myself, that men will say and swear any thing to gain their point; I dare, therefore, depend on nothing but an assurance from yourself of the reality of his professions. Tell me, I beseech you, how far the intended union between you is dissolved, and whether I may be his without a crime? Pity a rival, who would rather die than invade your property, if once convinced he is so; ease a suspense which has something in it more distracting, more cruel, than all that could be inflicted by the last despair on her who is, with the greatest respect, Madam, your most obedient, though unknown servant.

‘ P. S. I beg an immediate answer, because I have promised to give mine to Mr. Jessamy on his re-

‘ turn from Bath; and should be glad to know, before he comes, in what manner I ought to square my conduct towards him.’

On the first reading this letter, new alarms, new doubts, new jealousies, instantly filled the head and heart of Jenny; but, on the second perusal, there seemed to her something too romantick in the expression, as well as purport of it, for her to believe it founded upon real fact; and she began to fancy it was either intended by her enemies as an insult, or her friends as a jest: resolving, therefore, that from which quarter soever it came, neither of them should have any room to laugh at her behaviour on the occasion, she took a small piece of paper, and wrote in the following words.

‘ IF I were really possessed of all the good qualities ascribed to me in the letter before me, I know none of them that would oblige me to send any answer to an anonymous epistle: when the lady who wrote it thinks proper to reveal herself, she may depend on the satisfaction she desires; in the mean time she is at liberty to form what conjecture she pleases, and to be directed by them which appear to her to have the greatest probability of being right.’

This, without either seal or direction, and only folded in a careless manner, she gave to the messenger who had brought the letter, and bid him carry it to those who sent him.

She set herself down again in order to re-examine the contents of this extraordinary epistle; but the more she did so, the less able was she to conceive the real intention of it, or from what hand it came.

After forming, and as often rejecting, a thousand different conjectures, it at last came into her head, that the woman to whom Jemmy had wrote that letter which she received at Bath by mistake, had contrived this stratagem to create a dissention between them.

‘ I have heard,’ said she to herself, ‘ that women of the vile profession I suppose her of, value themselves upon these kind of artifices, and take a pride in the mischiefs they sometimes occasion; but certainly,’ continued she,

‘those on whom such little tricks have any effect must have a very small share of understanding. Jemmy, however,’ added she, after a pause, ‘will see by this the scandal and danger of entering into any sort of intimacy with such abandoned creatures.’

But though it must be acknowledged that there was the appearance of a good deal of reason to confirm her in this last opinion, yet I believe the sagacious reader, by what has been the business of several chapters in the first volume of this work, will easily guess that the letter in question was only an addition to the former attempts made by the invidious Bellpine to dissolve that cement of affection which had so long united the hearts of our two lovers.

It was, indeed, no other than that base man, who knowing she was in town, by having accidentally met her footman in the morning, had taken this method of corroborating the many others which he before had put in practice.

He waited at a coffee-house in the neighbourhood, to see what return Jenny would make by his emissary; which finding not so satisfactory as he wished, he went directly to visit her, hoping that by her countenance and behaviour, immediately after the receipt of this letter, he would be able to discover, more than by her answer to it, what effect it had wrought upon her.

It has been already observed, that Jemmy had inspired her with the best opinion of this treacherous friend; so she no sooner heard he was below, than she ordered he should be introduced, and received him with that sweetness and affability with which she always treated those whom she thought deserving of it.

What company were at Bath; who made the most brilliant appearance there; who won, and who lost at play; with other such like matters, employed the first moments of their conversation: but Bellpine, desirous of turning it on something more applicable to his purpose, gave over speaking on these subjects as soon as he could do so without abruptness.

‘Mr. Jessamy must certainly be very unhappy, Madam,’ said he, ‘on finding you had quitted Bath before his arrival there.’—‘He deserves little pity

‘on that score,’ replied Jenny: ‘you men can always find ways to divert yourselves; few of you regret the absence of an old friend, when you have so many opportunities of engaging new ones.’

Though she spoke these words with a very gay air, yet there was a certain keenness in her looks at the same time, which persuaded this watchful observer that his plot had not entirely failed of the success he aimed at.

‘I do not pretend, Madam,’ resumed he, ‘to dive into the sentiments of Mr. Jessamy; but I am very sure, that if you were free, and at liberty to be adored, there are men in the world who would think no joy equal to that of gazing on you, and of repeating every day, every hour, nay, every minute, the influence of your charms.’

‘It is possible, indeed,’ answered she, ‘that there may be some who would endeavour to make me believe so, and that might be even vain enough to imagine I was pleased with what they said: it is, therefore, very fortunate for me, that I was disposed of by my parents before I arrived at an age to be teased with such impertinence.’

‘It is strange how you have escaped them. However, Madam,’ said he, ‘your marriage with Mr. Jessamy being so long delayed, might reasonably tempt those who wish it so, to flatter themselves with a belief that it never will be accomplished, and that there was somewhat of a disinclination either on the one side or the other.’

These words made her not doubt but that the report she had heard so much of concerning Jemmy’s inconstancy had also reached his ears; and she would certainly have been instigated, if not by female curiosity, by love or jealousy, to enter into some discourse with him on that head, if the intimacy between them had not restrained her, as she thought he would not betray to her the secret of his friend, in case he were entrusted with it.

What he said, however, bringing fresh to her memory the vexation she had lately undergone on this account, her countenance went through several changes in the space of half a minute. ‘Whoever should think in the manner you mention,’ replied she, ‘would discover a great want of judgment: a conjecture

‘conjecture of this nature could be justified only by the behaviour of one or other of us; and I believe it has been such on both sides as to give no room for suspicion that either of us regretted the agreement made between our parents.’

A lady to whom Jenny had sent a card that morning, to give notice of her being in town, that same instant coming in, prevented Bellpine from making any answer; and he took his leave soon after, having discovered by this visit that his artifices had given her some uneasiness, but less resentment than was necessary for the success of his design.

CHAP. XVIII.

IS DULL ENOUGH TO PLEASE THOSE WHO TAKE AN ILL-NATURED DELIGHT IN FINDING SOMETHING TO CONDEMN; YET IS NOT WITHOUT OCCURRENCES WHICH WILL KEEP AWAKE THE ATTENTION OF SUCH WHO READ WITH A DESIRE OF BEING AGREEABLY AMUSED.

THE lady who came to visit Jenny was extremely good-humoured, but a little too talkative; she never exceeded the bounds of truth in any thing she said, but gave herself not the trouble of considering how far the truths she uttered were proper to be revealed.

I have observed, that people of this temper frequently do as much mischief, without designing it, as those of the most malicious intentions are capable of: and though sincerity be among the number of the most valuable virtues, yet there are many circumstances wherein to speak all one knows may produce as bad consequences as to speak more than one knows.

I never happened to fall into the company of either man or woman of this stamp, but I have fresh in memory some lines I formerly read in Browne's works—

‘Those babbling echoes of whate’er they hear,
‘Fame’s menial servants, who her tidings bear,
‘Sow such dissention, kindle such debate,
‘As turns all sweet to sour, all love to hate.’

But to return to my subject. Bellpine had no sooner left the two ladies together, than Jenny’s friend began to ex-

press some wonder at seeing her in town so much before the time she was expected: ‘What,’ cried she, ‘is there any disagreement between you and Mr. Jessamy?’

‘No, not any,’ replied Jenny, a little startled at the question: ‘but wherefore do you ask?’—‘Nay,’ resumed the other, ‘it was only a foolish imagination of my own: not but I had some reason for it, too. You must know, that I thought you had been told something of him that had made you angry; and so, when you heard he was coming down to Bath, you immediately flounced up to London.’

‘All a mistake, upon my word!’ said Jenny: ‘the ladies I was with had some business in town; and my unwillingness to be left behind was the sole cause of my returning to London so soon. But, pray, what put such a thing into your head?’

‘I did not think to tell you,’ answered this fair gossip; ‘but since you press me—though I am afraid it will vex you—yet I think, too, you ought to know it; and if you will promise me not to fret, I will let you into the whole secret.’

Jenny then said, that she should listen without pain to any thing she had to relate, and gave her many more assurances of her philosophy in this point than she had occasion to do; as the other was no less impatient to disburden herself of the secret than she was to be made a sharer in it.

‘Well, men will be men,’ said the lady; ‘there is no such thing as changing nature: but, sure, I made the discovery I am going to tell you, by the oddest accident that ever was; I suppose you know Mrs. Comode, the habbit-maker?’—‘No,’ replied Jenny; ‘but I have heard of her.’

‘I buy all my things of her,’ resumed the other; ‘she has vast business, and I think the genteelst fancy of any woman of her profession about town; every thing she makes up sits with such an air! You must know, I had bespoke a fly-petticoat with fringes of her: it not being sent home according to the time she promised, I called in one morning as I passed that way to see if it was done; she made a thousand apologies, and said I should have it that day; but I scolded heartily, and insisted upon seeing how near it

‘ was finished; on which she ran up to fetch it, leaving me alone in the shop.

‘ The moment she was gone,’ continued this tale-monger, ‘ I found my garter was split; I durst not venture to tie it up in that place, for fear somebody should come in; and was running into a little room behind the shop; but, Lord! I shall never forget how I was surprised; I had no sooner pushed open the door of that place, who do you think I saw there?’

‘ I cannot guess, indeed, my dear; but expect you will inform me,’ replied Jenny. ‘ Why, no other,’ said she, ‘ than the very individual Mr. Jessamy!—Do not be uneasy now—sitting as close to a fine lady as two kernels in a nut-shell, hand in hand, and one of his arms across her shoulder: they were so earnest in discourse, that they either did not hear the door open, or thought it was Mrs. Comode herself; but both seemed in great confusion, and started from their seats when I came in. Whether Mr. Jessamy saw enough of me to distinguish who I was, I know not; for I only cried—“ I ask pardon,” and went out of the room with as much haste as I had entered.

‘ Mrs. Comode came down presently after, and brought the petticoat; but I was in such a consternation at what I had seen, that I could scarce look upon it. I told her of what had happened, but did not say I knew either of the parties. She appeared very much shocked, but made an awkward excuse; said they were two of her customers that had been walking that morning, and came in to beg a pot of tea; on which I took no farther notice; but have had no good opinion of her ever since.

‘ Some woman of the town, I suppose,’ said Jenny: ‘ pray, what sort of creature was it he had with him?’—‘ Nay,’ answered the other, ‘ you cannot think it possible for me to give any particular description of her by the momentary glimpse I had of her; but I cannot say that altogether she looked like such a person.’

Jenny had boasted of so much fortitude, that she was a little vexed she had betrayed any want of it by the question she had asked; but she afterwards atoned for it by affecting the most perfect indifference during the rest of the

conversation they had together on this subject, which lasted almost the whole time the lady staid.

Nothing is more painful than, when the mind is discomposed, to be under a necessity of concealing it: Jenny had been impatient to be alone long before she was so, and found a good deal of ease when she attained an opportunity of reflecting at leisure on what she had heard.

The story told her by this lady had not so much affected her, as the hint given her by Bellpine, concerning a supposition that the match between her and Jemmy was on the point of being broke off. This tallying so exactly with the intelligence sent to Lady Speck at Bath, convinced her that such a thing was really talked of in town, and could not but very much alarm both her love and pride.

Yet when she remembered her lover’s tender letter from Ham-Hall, and the many others she had received from him while she was at Bath; besides the haste she found he had made in hurrying down to that place, in expectation of meeting her there; she could not tell how to think it possible, that, if guilty as represented, he could be capable of such deceit.

‘ There is no answering for the hearts of men,’ said she: ‘ love is an involuntary passion; chance or fatality directs the choice, and sometimes a single moment undoes the work of years. I should not be surprised that Jemmy happened to see a face which had more charms for him than mine: but wherefore, then, should he carry on the deception with me? How would it avail his new flame to pretend to prosecute a former one? No,’ continued she, after pausing a little; ‘ for him to act in this manner would be as inconsistent with reason and common sense, as with honour and justice; and it would also be the utmost weakness in me to believe it.’

Thus did she make herself tolerably easy as to the main part of what was laid to his charge; but as to his having entered into an affair of gallantry, she had too plain a proof of that under his own hand-writing, to admit the least room for doubt, and needed not the confirmation she had just received of it from her friend.

Upon the whole, however, few young ladies in her circumstances would have suffered less inquietude; and this must be

be said of her, that it was much more difficult to raise any tempest in her mind, than it was to calm that tempest after it had been raised.

Neither grief nor anger had the power to affect her long, or to drive her to any excesses while they lasted: a humour extremely volatile, a great deal of good-nature, and an equal share of understanding, were happily united in her composition, and made her always ready to believe the best, and to forgive the worst.

The small remains of repentment and discontent, on the various occasions that had been given her for both, were entirely dissipated, when, on the evening of the succeeding day, she received a letter from Jemmy, the contents whereof were as follow.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY.

‘ MY MORE THAN EVER DEAR JENNY!

‘ I Have certainly been of late one of the most unlucky fellows in the universe; first, to be detained, by a series of cross accidents, from following you in a few days, as I proposed; then, when I had dispatched those vexatious affairs, and just upon the wing to fly to Bath, to be dragged to another quarter of the kingdom, by one whose entreaties you know I could not well deny; and, lastly, when, got free from every care but my impatience to be with you, I arrived here full-fraught with the expectation of meeting all my soul holds dear, to find you had left the place scarce twenty-four hours before I came; judge how sincerely I am mortified! I suppose the caprice of those you were with carried you so suddenly from hence: but I hope that day is now near at hand when those who take you will be obliged to take me also; for indeed, my dear Jenny, I am quite weary of this life. Whenever I am from you for any length of time, I feel, methinks, as if separated from myself: the more I see of other women, the more I regret the absence of my dear Jenny. As I came hither pretty early last night, I went to the Long-room: there were a great many fine ladies there; but all their beauties are without a charm for me; I can be gay, but not happy, in their company; the power of giving true felicity to Jemmy is reserved only for his dear, dear Jenny.

‘ I give you warning, therefore, not to think of delaying any longer a blessing I have been made to hope for ever since my first putting on breeches reminded me that, if I lived, I should be one day a man; but be assured I should have little joy in being so, if it were not for the expectation of being yours by a more tender title than that with which I now subscribe myself, unalterably and inviolably, my dear, dear Jenny’s most passionately devoted, most faithful lover, and ever humble and obedient servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. I would have set out to-morrow morning on my return for London, but my servant got an ugly fall from his horse in coming hither, and is very much bruised; so I am willing to give him one day to recover himself; but hope, the next, to be so far on my journey towards you, as that there will be but a few hours distance between your receiving this and the author of it; till when I am, my dear, dear Jenny,

‘ Your’s, as above.’

Jenny was now in such great good-humour with her lover, that she grew half resolved to consent to his desires for the consummation of their marriage, if it were only to put a final end to those idle reports which had been spread concerning his having an intention to break it off.

But before we bring them together again, it is highly necessary that the reader should be made fully acquainted with the manner in which Jemmy had passed his time during this little separation, and also to clear up those parts of his conduct which have hitherto appeared mysterious.

C H A P. XIX.

RETURNS TO WHAT HAS, DOUBTLESS, BEEN LONG AGO EXPECTED; AND OPENS A NEW SCENE OF VARIOUS AND ENTERTAINING OCCURRENCES.

I Am very much afraid that poor Jemmy has lain for a great while under the displeasure of my fair readers, and that few among them will be quite so ready

ready as Jenny has been to take his bare word for a sufficient proof of his honour, and the sincerity of his passion.

It is high time, therefore, to let his actions speak for themselves; and if they cannot shew him so wholly blameless as could be wished, from the frailties of youth and nature, they will at least defend his character from the more gross imputations of perfidiousness, ingratitude, and deceit.

As I have no view to self-interest in this work; no time-server, no patron to please; it may be depended on that I shall present my hero such as he truly is; and not, like some political historians of a modern date, attempt to mislead the judgment by any false glosses or misrepresentations of facts.

The writers I have been speaking of will not allow the person on whom Fortune has not vouchsafed to smile, any one virtue or good quality; he must be all black, without a single speck of white, even to excite the compassion of the world: what false steps he may have been guilty of are ascribed to his own innate propensity to evil, not to any inadvertency, nor to the wicked insinuations of those on whom he may unhappily have depended, and who, perhaps, have found their interest in pushing him on to things purposely to betray and ruin him.

Whereas, on the other hand, the man whom a concurrence of fortuitous events, or perhaps some indirect measures of his own or partizans contrivance, have raised to prosperity, shall be mounted on the pinnacle of fame; his virtues, if he has any, be resounded even to the remotest borders of the earth; and all his vices, though numerous as the hairs upon his head, and glaring with red impiety, be so screened and shadowed over with the incense of panegyrick, as not to be discerned but by a few eagle-eyed observers; but I shall say no more; these authors, perhaps, earn their sustenance by the labour of the pen; these are not times for Truth to go clad in velvet; and there is no serving God and Mammon.

I cannot, however, without great injustice, close this reflection till I have taken notice that there is one who bravely, and almost alone, has courage to enter the lists of battle against an host of adversaries; and attempts to rescue injured innocence from the claws of cruel

and all-devouring Scandal: may his honest endeavours meet the success they merit; and, in spite of prejudice and partiality, open the eyes of too long hood-wink'd Reason!

And now for our *Jemmy Jessamy*. Nothing is more certain than that he had determined to follow his dear Jenny to Bath, according to his promise, as soon as the affairs which brought his steward to town should be dispatched; nor was he less uneasy than one of his letters, inserted in a former chapter, had intimated to her, on finding himself likely to be detained in London so much longer than he had expected at the time of her departure.

Business of any kind, especially of that sort in which he was now engaged, was no way agreeable to his humour; to be obliged to sit for hours together reading over leases, bonds, and ejections, instead of poetry and books of diversion; to converse every day with men of pleasure; was extremely distasteful to him: but, in the midst of all this, he met with something, which, though he did not think of any great moment, served, however, to add to the perplexity of his mind, and involve him in an embarrassment he had never dreamt of.

He was at breakfast one morning, when his servant informed him, that a gentleman who called himself *Morgan* desired to speak with him: this was a person for whom *Jemmy* had a very great esteem, not only on account of many good qualities he was possessed of, but likewise as he knew he had been always highly respected by his father.

He gave orders that he should be immediately introduced; and when he was so, began to testify, with as much sincerity as politeness, how much he thought himself indebted to him for the favour of this visit; but he was soon interrupted by the other, who, with an honest plainness, replied in these terms.

‘*Mr. Jessamy,*’ said he, ‘this is not a visit of mere ceremony; I come not hither at this time either to make or receive any compliments, but to do you a more essential service, and myself a more real pleasure. To be free with you,’ continued he, ‘I am very much troubled at some things I have heard in relation to you; and would gladly offer you such advice as my long experience of the world may enable me to give you.’

Few young people like to have their conduct called in question: Jemmy presently imagined that the old gentleman had been informed of some little flights, some trifling irregularities, which company and the gaiety of his own temper might have led him into, and expected to be entertained with a grave lesson on that occasion; he told him, however, that he should willingly listen to any instructions he should give him.

‘I believe,’ resumed Mr. Morgan, ‘that you are convinced I wish you well; but if you are not, I hope what I have to say will make you so. Mifs take me not,’ pursued he, seeing the other look very serious; ‘I am not going to reprimand you; I know not as yet whether you deserve it: I have not seen Mifs Jessamy since she was an infant; I have heard, indeed, a very good character both of her person and accomplishments; but you are the best judge of her merits, as well as of your own heart. I am confident, that when your parents agreed upon a marriage between you, they meant not it should render either of you miserable; so have nothing to say as to that: but, whatever be the motive of your breaking with her, I would not have you, methinks, transfer your addresses to any one where there is not a greater probability of being more happy.’

Jemmy was so confounded, so astonished, at hearing him speak in this manner, that he had not the power, for some moments, of uttering one syllable; and when he had, it was only to cry—‘Breaking with her, Sir! What! breaking with Mifs Jessamy?’

‘You have, doubtless, your own reasons for so doing,’ replied the good old gentleman: ‘but let that pass; I would only have you be wary how you make a second choice. It is not in my nature to traduce the character of any one: Mifs Chit may be a very deserving young woman, for any thing I have to accuse her of; but you know very well that her family is doubtful, her fortune precarious, and, if she should have any, it will be little for her husband’s honour to receive. Besides, this is not the worst; for though she may be virtuous in fact, yet she keeps company with some persons of both sexes, which does not become a woman who has any regard for reputation: in short, my dear Mr. Jes-

samy, she is in no respect a fit wife for you.’

‘A wife for me!’ said Jemmy, not yet recovered from his amazement; ‘for Heaven’s sake, Sir, explain the meaning of all this! You talk of things which have so little analogy with my intentions, that they never once entered into my head or heart. To break my engagements with Mifs Jessamy, or to make my addresses to Mifs Chit, are both of them equally inconsistent with my inclinations as with my reason; and it is not possible for me to conceive how such chimeras could come into the thoughts of any one.’

‘As to the first,’ answered Mr. Morgan, ‘I have heard it mentioned in several companies where I have been, as an event past all dispute; and as to what concerns Mifs Chit, I was not only told it by a person who frequently visits her, but also had it confirmed yesterday at the coffee-house by her own father; who being asked if there was any truth in the report of an intended marriage between his daughter and Mr. Jessamy, replied with his usual stiffness and formality, That he believed a treaty of that nature was upon the carpet.’

Jemmy, on hearing this, was fully persuaded, that so idle a rumour could proceed from nothing but the vanity of that young lady; which so incensed him against her, that he could not forbear, in the first emotions of passion, speaking of her in terms which nothing but the occasion could excuse.

As he was discussing the matter with Mr. Morgan, and convincing that gentleman of the entire fallacy of all he had reproached him with, a card was brought from Mifs Chit, in which was wrote these words.

‘MISS Chit gives her compliments to Mr. Jessamy; and desires his company to a concert to be performed by private hands this evening at her house.’

‘Now, Sir,’ said he to Mr. Morgan, ‘you shall see the little influence the charms of this vain girl have over me. I will send her a letter instead of a card; and such a one as shall put an effectual stop to all the foolish imaginations she may have conceived on my account.’

He then took pen and paper; and, without giving himself much trouble to consider what he was about, wrote to her in these terms.

‘ TO MISS CHIT.

‘ MADAM,

‘ **B**USINESS denies me the pleasure of accepting your invitation; but I lay hold of this opportunity of taking my leave of you, as I cannot do it in person.

‘ Love and honour summon me to Bath, where my dear Miss Jessamy is gone before. As it is impossible but you must have heard of my engagements with that lady, you will not wonder that I am in the utmost impatience to follow her.

‘ Whenever you venture on marriage, I wish you all the happiness which I hope very shortly to enjoy in that state with the admirable lady to whom I am going. I am, with thanks for all favours, Madam, your most obedient, humble servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.’

This letter, after having shewed it to Mr. Morgan, and received his approbation, Jemmy sent directly away, and gave orders that it should be left for the lady without waiting for any answer.

On talking farther of this affair, they both concluded that the report must have taken rise originally from the vanity of the daughter, and the stupidity of the father; who, misconstruing the civilities Jemmy treated them with, as the effects of an amorous inclination, had boasted of the imaginary conquest to some of their acquaintance; those again had whispered it to others, till it went round, and became, as is common in such cases, the universal secret.

Thus had the artifices of Bellpine made Miss Chit and her father, who were in reality no more than the dupes of his design, appear as the principal contrivers of it. There is nothing, indeed, in which the judgment is so liable to be deceived, as in endeavouring to discover the first author of a calumny; those generally stand behind the curtain, content themselves with the invention, and leave the work of malice to be performed by others; as one of our poets says—

‘ ‘Tis difficult, when rumour once is spread,
‘ To trace it’s windings to the fountain-head.’

The injustice which Jemmy and his friend were guilty of in this point, may, however, have some claim to absolution, as this belief was founded on the most strong probability of truth that could be.

These gentlemen parted not till the clock striking three, reminded them of dinner: Mr. Morgan, being engaged at home, would fain have taken Jemmy with him; but he was not at present in a humour for much company, therefore desired to be excused from complying with the invitation.

C H A P. XX.

IS SHORT, BUT PITHY.

A Volatile temper is not always a sufficient security against discontent. Jemmy loved his dear Jenny even more than he knew he did himself; and to be assured from a mouth whose veracity he was too well convinced of to suspect, that it was said he had quitted her for the sake of Miss Chit, he looked upon as such an indignity to her merits, as gave him more pain than any censure the supposed change might bring upon himself.

He wrote to her that same night; but as he hoped the idle report which gave him so much vexation could not as yet, at least, have extended itself so far as Bath, he thought it improper to make any mention of it till he should see her in person, and have the better opportunity of proving the falshood of it: he complained, therefore, only of the business that kept him so long from her; and his heart now more than ever overflowing with love and tenderness, his expressions were comformable.

This was the letter which Jenny received immediately after the intelligence given her by Lady Speck and Miss Wingman of his supposed infidelity: the effects of it have been already shewn, and need not be repeated.

Bellpine, who had been at Miss Chit’s concert, was a good deal surpris’d at not finding Jemmy there, as he knew he had been invited; but much more when that young lady, taking him aside, shewed him the answer that had been sent

sent to her card, and reproached him, in terms pretty severe, for having endeavoured to persuade her she was mistress of a heart which she now found was so firmly attached to another.

It is natural, when the mind is overcharged with thoughts of any kind, to disburden itself to those who we believe take an interest in our affairs: Jemmy had not a greater confidence in any one man of his acquaintance than Bellpine; it may be supposed, therefore, that he failed not to communicate to him the perplexity he was at present under, and the story which had occasioned it.

That faithless friend affected the utmost astonishment at the recital; and cried out, with a shew of the most affectionate zeal—‘ Good God! I hope Miss Jessamy has heard nothing of this.’

‘ I think it scarce possible,’ replied Jemmy, ‘ that such a report can have reached her ears, at least as yet, in the place where she is; and as I hope to be with her in a few days, I shall take care to arm her against what she might be told hereafter, by relating it myself.’

This greatly disconcerted Bellpine: he had flattered himself that Jemmy’s affairs would have detained him so long in London, that the stratagems laid to inspire her with a belief of his inconsistency would have taken too strong a hold of her heart to be totally removed. Fain would he have dissuaded him from going to Bath, but could find no reasons for that purpose plausible enough to prevent the real motive from being suspected. Chance, however, at present befriended his designs, and did that for him which all his invention, fertile as it was, could not furnish him with the means of accomplishing.

As Jemmy, in an indolent and uncontented mood, was one day loitering in Covent Garden Piazza, a fine gilt chariot, with two footmen behind it, stopped at one of the arches; and just as he was passing, an ancient gentleman and a very young lady alighted out of it, and went into the Great Auction-house, lately Mr. Cock’s, but now occupied in the same manner by Mr. Langford.

He started, and was strangely surprised at sight of this lady; not on account of her beauty, though she was handsome beyond description, but be-

cause he thought himself perfectly well acquainted with her face; but where, or at what time he had been so, he could not presently recollect.

He stood for the space of several minutes endeavouring to recover a more distinct idea of that lovely person; but finding it impossible, he stepped to one of the footmen, who was leaning his back against a pillar, and asked him to whom that chariot belonged; and being answered—‘ To Sir Thomas Hardy,’ ‘ Then,’ resumed Jemmy, ‘ I suppose the young lady with him is his daughter?’—‘ No, Sir,’ replied the fellow with a smile, which he was not able to restrain, ‘ I assure you she is his wife.’

Jemmy on this began to think he had been mistaken: resolving, however, to be convinced, he went into the auction-room, doubting not but a second and more full view would set him right.

There was a great deal of company; but he presently singled her out, and was now more assured than ever, that they were no strangers to each other; when, on fixing his eyes upon her, he perceived her countenance change at sight of him, that she grew pale and red by turns, and betrayed all the marks of the utmost confusion.

Yet all this was not sufficient to enable him to bring back to remembrance what curiosity made him so desirous of retrieving, till the lady, taking the opportunity of her husband’s being engaged in looking over some pictures, advanced hastily towards him, and said in a low voice—‘ What, has Mr. Jessamy forgot his Celia of the Woods?’

‘ Heavens!’ cried he, ‘ what a stupid dolt was I!’—‘ Hush,’ replied she, ‘ take no notice of me here.’ She had kept her eyes upon her husband all the time she was speaking to Jemmy, and observing that he now looked that way, rejoined him in an instant.

The old baronet kept very close to his fair wife all the rest of the time; yet had she the address to steal a moment just to bid Jemmy meet her at ten the next morning at the end of the Mall next Buckingham House.

He could only give her a bow of assent; and remained in a consternation, which only can be guessed at by the knowledge who Celia was, and the intercourse he formerly had with her.

C H A P. XXI.

DISCOVERS CELIA OF THE WOODS
ON HER FIRST ACQUAINTANCE
WITH JEMMY, AND ALSO SOME
OTHER PARTICULARS OF EQUAL
IMPORTANCE.

THOUGH Jemmy, when he was at Oxford, debarred himself from few of those gay amusements which he saw taken by his fellow collegians, yet he applied himself to his studies more closely than most gentlemen-commoners think they are under any obligation to do; and, because he would not be interrupted, would frequently steal from the university, and pass whole hours together in the fields, either reading or contemplating.

A pretty warm dispute happening to rise one day between two students, concerning the true reading of Persius, he was ambitious of becoming more master of the subject than either of them seemed to be; accordingly he put the book into his pocket, and repaired to the usual place of retirement.

The evening was fair and pleasant, and he was so much absorbed in meditation, that he wandered on to a greater distance from the town than he had been accustomed; till at last, finding himself a little weary, he sat down at the foot of a large spreading oak.

Here he prosecuted the examination of that crabbed author; but had not long done so before he was interrupted, and his eyes taken off by the sudden appearance of a sight more pleasing.

The tree, which served him at once for a support and screen, was just at the entrance of a little wood; a rustling among the leaves made him look that way, where he immediately saw a young country maid; she was neat, though plainly dressed; and had eyes which might vie with any that sparkled in the box or drawing-room.

At this view he was not master of himself; like Carlos at the sight of Angelina in the play, he threw away his book, started from the posture he was in, and advanced towards the sweet temptation: she saw him too, and fled, but not so fast as not to be easily overtaken.

The first rencounter between these

two young persons reminds me of a passage I have read in one of our best poets—

‘As Mahomet was musing in his cell,
‘Some dull insipid paradise to trace,
‘A brisk Arabian girl came tripping by:
‘Passing, she shot at him a side-long glance,
‘And look’d behind, as if to be pursu’d;
‘He took the hint, embrac’d the flying fair;
‘And, having found his heaven, he fix’d it
‘there.’

It is not to be imagined that Jemmy accorded a maid of her degree with any set speeches or formal salutations: those charms which in a woman of condition would have inspired him with a respectful awe, served only to fill his heart with the most unwarrantable desires; he told her she was pretty, and at the same time attempted to convince her that he thought her so, by catching her forcibly in his arms, and giving her two or three hearty kisses.

She struggled, blushed, cried—‘Fye, Sir!’ and desired him to forbear; but our young commoner was not to be so easily rebuffed; the little repulses she gave him served only the more to inflame his amorous inclination; and he had perhaps compleated his conquest without any farther ceremony, if she had not fallen on her knees, and with tears besought him to desist.

Jemmy had too much honour and good nature not to be touched with a behaviour so moving, and which he had so little reason to expect from the weak efforts she at first made to repel his caresses.

‘Nay, my dear creature,’ said he, ‘I scorn to do any thing by force; but if all the love in the world can make you mine, I shall be happy: tell me, therefore,’ continued he, ‘who you are, and where you live, that I may see you another time.’

‘Oh lud, Sir!’ cried she, ‘that is impossible: what do you think my friends would say, if they should see such a gentleman as you come to visit me?’—‘I did not mean so,’ replied he: ‘but I suppose your father lives hereabout; and, it may be, is of some business that might give a pretence for my calling at his house.’

‘My father keeps a farm,’ said she, ‘about six miles off; but I am at pre-

‘sent

'sent with my uncle, who is a gardener, and lives on the other side of the wood.'—'That's unlucky,' rejoined he; 'for I have no sort of occasion for any thing in his way. You must, then, consent to meet me. my little angel,' added he, tenderly pressing her hand.

On this she blushed, hung down her head, but made no answer; till he repeating his request, and enforcing it by all the rhetoric he was master of, whether real or feigned I will not pretend to say, she at last promised to meet him the next evening at the place where they now were.

He received this grant with the greatest shew of transport, but made her swear to the fulfilling it; after which he asked her by what name he should think of his dear pretty charmer. 'They call me Celia, Sir,' said she. 'Then,' cried he, 'you shall be my Celia of the Woods; and I will be your Jessamy of the Plains.'

The sun beginning now to withdraw his beams, they were obliged to part; but before they did, Celia gave evident indications that her Jessamy had made no slight impression on her young and unexperienced heart.

Jemmy returned from his evening's excursion with thoughts very full of this new amour, which he flattered himself would afford him a most agreeable amusement, without costing much pains in the acquisition.

Besides, the liking he had for this country girl seemed to him to be no breach of his fidelity to Jenny, or any way interfere with the honourable affections he had for that young lady; she being then but in her sixteenth year, himself not quite nineteen, and was not intended by their parents that they should marry till they had attained the age of one and twenty; so that it was a long time to the completion of his felicity with her. I know not whether my fair readers will look upon this as a sufficient excuse for him; but dare answer, that those of the other sex will think what he did was no more than a venial transgression.

As for poor Celia, she was in agitations which she had never known, nor had the least notion of before; she was charmed with the person of Jemmy; she was quite ravished at the kind things he had said to her; and

the liberties he had taken with her at that first interview would have been shocking to her modesty, had they been offered by any of those whom she was accustomed to converse with; yet did that very rudeness in him appear too agreeable to alarm her with any dreadful apprehensions of his repeating it.

More full of joy than fear, she longed for the appointed hour of meeting him again, and hastened to the rendezvous, where she had not waited many minutes before the charmer of her soul appeared: he flew to her with open arms; and the transport she felt made her half return the strenuous embrace he gave her.

They sat down together upon a little hillock, beneath the shade of some trees which arched above their heads, and formed a kind of canopy; here Jemmy, finding her softened to his wish, would fain have finished the affair he had made so considerable a progress in; but, on perceiving his intent, she burst a second time into tears; begged he would not ruin her; confessed she loved him, but said she could not bear the thoughts of being naughty.

He could scarce keep himself from laughing; but as he had promised not to make use of force, failed not to urge all the arguments that such a thing would admit of, to persuade her that what he requested of her was not naughtiness in itself, but perfectly conformable to the laws of nature.

She was too ignorant, and perhaps also too little inclined, to attempt any thing in order to do what he said on this occasion; and though she refused with less resolution than she had done, yet she would not absolutely consent to his desires: on which Jemmy, not doubting but the fruit thus ripened would soon fall of itself, told her, that he was not of a humour to accept of any favours granted with reluctance, and that he would content himself with such as he should find her willing to bestow.

He kept his word, and pressed her no farther at that time: this the poor innocent creature looked upon as so great a condescension in him, and thought herself so much obliged by it, that she readily allowed his kisses, his embraces, and, in short, every freedom except that only one which he had assured her he would not take without her leave.

Notwithstanding what they called the

crown of a lover's felicity was wanting, this couple passed the time they were together in a manner pleasing enough to both; nor parted without a mutual promise of re-enjoying the same happiness again on the ensuing day.

Jemmy, however, who was of too sanguine and amorous a disposition not to feel a good deal of impatience for the consummation of his wishes, in order to hasten it, contrived a stratagem, which, from the ascendant he had gained over Celia's heart, gave him no room to doubt would fail of success in making her lovely person no less entirely his. It was this.

He approached her at their next meeting with the most solemn and dejected air. She had brought him a fine posy selected from the choicest flowers in her uncle's garden, tied together with a piece of green ribband: she was going to present it to him, when perceiving the change in his countenance, she started, and asked him if he was not well.

'No, Celia,' answered he, affecting to speak in a very faint voice, 'I am sick; sick at heart.'—'Indeed I am very sorry,' said she: 'smell to this posy; I hope it will refresh you, my dear Sir.'—'No, Celia,' returned he, 'it is not in the power of art or nature to relieve me: you must lose your lover; I must die, my Celia.'—'Now, all that's good forbid it!' cried she, and wept bitterly.

'I must die,' said he again; 'or, what is worse than death, never see my Celia more.' Surprized and overwhelmed with the melting passions of love and grief at hearing him speak in this manner, she threw her taper arms about his neck, laid her cheek close to his, and begged him to tell her what he meant, and the cause of his complaint.

'You dear, cruel maid,' answered he, with a well counterfeited agony, 'it is you who are the cause of my complaint; and it is you alone can be my cure: in short, it is impossible for me to breathe the same air with you and not see you; yet every time I see you gives fresh tortures to my bleeding heart, by letting me know still more of the heaven I am denied possessing. I have, therefore, taken a resolution to banish myself for ever

from you, and from this country. 'You must, then,' continued he, embracing her with the utmost eagerness, 'either lose all your Jessamy, or give me all my Celia.'

The consternation she was in is not to be expressed; but every look, every emotion, betrayed to him the inward trouble of her mind. She could not speak for several minutes; but at last cried out, with a voice interrupted with sighs—'Oh, Mr. Jessamy! will you, can you, be so barbarous to leave me, leave me for ever?'

'Call not that barbarous which your unkindness drives me to,' rejoined he: 'if I loved you with a common passion, I could, perhaps, be easy under the severe restriction you have laid me under; but you are too beautiful, and I too much enamoured: oh, then, throw off at once this cruel coyness! this unmerciful reserve! Generously say you will be all mine, and make both me and yourself completely blessed.'

He uttered these last words in accents which pierced her to the soul: she was all confusion; irresolute for a while; sometimes looking on him, and sometimes on the ground: but love at length, prevailing love, got the better of that bashfulness, which it is likely had, more than any other principle, till now restrained her from yielding to his suit; she threw herself into his arms; and, hiding her head within his bosom—'I cannot part with you,' cried she; 'I can deny you nothing; you have my heart, and must command whatever Celia has to give.'

There is a strong probability, if it does not amount even to a certainty, that Jemmy would not have given her time for a second thought, which might have revoked the promise she had made; but his plot, hitherto successful, was now entirely frustrated by the sudden sound of men's voices at a distance, and which seemed to approach more near.

'Oh lud!' cried she, extremely frightened, 'I hear my uncle: if he should come this way, and find me with a gentleman, he will tell my father, and I shall be half killed. Dear Mr. Jessamy, make all the haste you can out of the wood; I will go and face him, and pretend I was going to

‘to carry these flowers to a great lady who lives hard by.’

Jemmy could not forbear cursing both the uncle and the interruption; but thought proper to comply with Celia’s advice, after having exacted an oath from her to meet him again the next day, and fulfil her engagement; which she readily gave, and then tripped away as fast as her legs could carry her.

Thus did they part, not to see each other again for a much longer time than either of them imagined; the cause of which will presently be shewn.

CHAP. XXII.

IN WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, IT WILL BE FOUND HIGHLY PROPER, THAT SOME PASSAGES FORMERLY INSERTED SHOULD BE RECAPITULATED, IN ORDER TO FORM THE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE WHICH ARE NOW UPON THE TAPIS.

JEMMY returned to the college in no very good humour, as may be supposed, though the mortification of the disappointment he had received was very much alleviated by the assurance he had of Celia’s affection for him; but on his entering into his chambers he met with something which made the adventures of the day, and indeed all that passed between him and the country maid, vanish like a dream from his remembrance.

A letter was presented to him, which had been left for him by the post, summoning him immediately to London to receive the last commands and blessing of a dying father. Filial piety and dutious affection now took up all his mind, and he thought of nothing but to be speedy in his obedience to the authoritative mandate.

Accordingly he arose the next morning by break of day, rode post, and arrived in London before evening, as has been already related in the beginning of the first volume of this work.

On his going back to the university, after the melancholy solemnity of his father’s funeral was over, Celia came again a little into his head; and though he designed shortly to quit Oxford entirely, yet he thought that for the time

he staid he could not have a more agreeable amusement than the prosecution of that amour to divert his affliction for the loss he had sustained.

To this end he went to the wood; ranged through every part of that scene of their loves, but found no Celia there; he knew her uncle’s name, but not directly where he lived; or if he had, would not have thought it proper to go to his house to make any enquiry concerning her: happening, however, to see a fellow cutting down wood, he ventured to ask him if one Mr. Adams, a gardener, did not live somewhere thereabouts. ‘Aye, Sir,’ replied the man; ‘if you turn by that thicket, on your right-hand, you may see his house.’—‘Nay,’ said Jemmy carelessly, ‘I have no business with him; I have only heard that he is a very honest man.’—‘Aye, Sir,’ rejoined the other, ‘that he is, to be sure, as ever broke bread: I have known him above these thirty years, and never heard any thing ill of him in my life.’

Jemmy finding this fellow seemed to be of a communicative disposition, demanded of him what family Mr. Adams had. ‘Ah, Sir!’ said the man, ‘he has only two boys; one he brings up to his own business, and the other is a gentleman’s servant: his wife, rest her soul! has been dead two years come Michaelmas next; and he would have been quite helpless, if he had not got a brother’s daughter of his to look after his things; but she is gone’—now, I know not what the poor man will do: he was to have a maid, and there are so few of them good.’—‘What! is his niece dead too?’ cried Jemmy pretty hastily. ‘No, Sir,’ answered he; ‘but she is gone away. Her father, belike, sent for her home; I know not on what account, not I; but she has left poor Adams, and he is in a piteous plight.’

Jemmy being desirous of receiving as much intelligence as he could of his little mistress, affected to be in some concern for the honest gardener, her uncle, pretending he had heard much in his commendation from those that knew him; and said it was a great pity that the maid should be sent for away, as she was so useful to him, and so notable a manager.

‘Aye, very handy indeed; Sir,’ answered Mr. Adams’s friend: ‘he kept every

‘ every thing in the house so clean and so tight, it would have done your heart good to have seen it: but as to her father’s sending for her away, I do not know; mayhap he had a mind to have her under his own eye; he has the character of a parlous shrewd man, and sees things a great while before they come.’

‘ Was there any danger, then, to be apprehended in her staying?’ demanded Jemmy. ‘ I can say nothing to that, Sir: she is as likely, as comely a lass as any in the country round, but I believe very honest; though she has a kind of leer with her eyes, and is always simpering and smirking; and you know, Sir, that gives encouragement. There were a power of young fellows that had a hankering after her. I have heard my wife say, a thousand times I believe, and she is seldom mistaken, that she wished Celia might come to good.’

‘ Besides, Sir,’ continued he, shaking his head, ‘ we are so near the university here; and the young students are most of them wild blades, and spend their time more in running after the girls than in their books.’

It must be observed, that Jemmy was now in his travelling dress; for had he appeared as a gentleman-commoner, nobody can suppose that the countryman would have been so free in his discourse with him; which being once entered into, he would probably have gone on with till he had related all he knew of the news of the whole parish.

But Jemmy having satisfied his curiosity as fully as he could have desired, and much more than he had reason to expect, grew quite weary of this kind of conversation, and soon after took leave of his informer, and walked back to the college.

He had now lost his Celia of the Woods: he knew, indeed, where to find her; but as his stay in Oxford was to be very short, and he had many friends to see before he went away, he had no time to devote to the pursuit of a mistress so far removed; besides, he knew not what inconveniences might attend his seeking her at a father’s house; and was too indolent in his nature to risque any difficulties for the sake of gratifying a passion such as the beauty of that girl had inspired him with.

After he had quitted the university entirely, and was settled in London, besides the society of his dear Jenny, whom, in spite of the little excursions of his youth, he loved with the most pure and respectful passion, new scenes of life, new amusements, new pleasures, crowded upon his senses, and presently obliterated the memory of those he left behind.

Celia no more was wished for, no more thought on by him. How was it possible that after so long a space of time as two whole years, and having seen such a variety of beautiful faces, he should be able to recollect his plain country maid, under the character of a fine town lady, blazing with gold and jewels, attended by a splendid equipage, and dignified with a title?

This adventure, notwithstanding, served greatly to dissipate all the chagrin which the story invented in relation to his infidelity to Jenny had involved him in: he could not keep himself from being highly pleased at meeting with a person who had once so many charms for him, nor with finding, by her behaviour towards him, that so prodigious a change of fortune had not made the least change in her sentiments on his account: in a word, all the long dormant inclinations, which he had formerly felt for Celia, now revived in his bosom at the sight of Lady Hardy, and he hesitated not a moment whether he should comply with the appointment she had made him.

How uncertain, how wandering, are the passions of mankind! How yielding to every temptation that presents itself! Seldom are they masters of their own hearts or actions, especially at Jemmy’s years; and well may they deceive others in what they are deceived themselves!

When they profess to love no other object than the present, they may, perhaps, resolve to be as just as they pretend; but, alas! this is not in their power, even though it may be in their will: they can no more command their wishes than they can their thoughts; which, as Shakespeare tells us, ‘ Once lost, are gone beyond the clouds.’ We often see that, to reverse this boasted constancy, is the work of but a single minute; and then, in vain, their past professions recoil upon their minds: in
vain

vain the idea of the forsaken fair haunts them in nightly visions—

‘Formighty love, which honour does despise,
‘For reasons, shews them a new charmer’s
‘eyes.’

CHAP. XXIII.

CONTAINS ONLY SUCH ACCIDENTS
AS ARE TOO COMMON TO EXCITE
MUCH WONDER.

I Would not be understood, by the observations made on the generality of mankind in the close of the preceding chapter, that the vice of inconstancy ought to be imputed to the hero of this history: what in most others is the effect of a love of variety, was produced in him by the too great vivacity and sprightliness of his temper. He had sometimes very strong inclinations, but never a real affection for any but his dear Jenny; and, though these may have led him into errors which render him not wholly blameless, yet the permanence of his devoirs to that sole object of his honourable passion, shews his character to have in it infinitely more of light than shade.

Let no one, therefore, pass too severe a censure on his conduct in regard to this fair tempter, either as Celia of the Woods, or Lady Hardy. Whatever was the first motive of his addresses to her, curiosity to know how this transformation came about might now have, and doubtless had, some share in exciting him to renew his acquaintance with her.

I shall not, however, as I have more than once assured my readers, make any attempts either to palliate or disguise the truth. Jemmy was punctual to the hour that had been prefixed by his mistress; yet found her in the Park before him: she had placed herself on a bench behind the Mall, as being most free from company. When he first discerned her, she seemed talking to a young woman, who stood waiting near her, but left her ladyship alone before he could come up to them.

‘How little possible was it for me
‘to expect this blessing!’ said he, approaching her. ‘Hold, hold!’ cried she, interrupting him; ‘we have no
‘time at present for fine speeches; and
‘you will be surprized to find your-

self summoned here only to be told
‘you must be gone.’—‘I should be
‘indeed surprized,’ rejoined he; ‘but
‘how have I deserved to be so un-
‘happy?’

‘No, no!’ replied she, smiling; ‘you
‘are not unhappy, though I could easily
‘tell you how you deserve to be so:
‘but this is no place either for a quar-
‘rel or a reconciliation. You must
‘know, I could not come out alone,
‘for fear of giving suspicion to my old
‘husband, so brought my woman with
‘me; but, as soon as I saw you, sent
‘her home under the pretence of fetch-
‘ing my snuff-box, which I left be-
‘hind me for that purpose: she will
‘be here again in two minutes, for we
‘live but in the next street, and have
‘a door into the Park. Therefore take
‘this,’ continued she; ‘and be careful
‘to do as this directs.’

‘Let me first examine how I approve
‘of the contents,’ said he, with his ac-
‘customed gaiety. ‘You may,’ answered
‘she; ‘but then you will lose the only
‘moment that I have to tell you I am
‘as much yours as ever, and that I
‘have not known one joy in life since
‘last we parted.’—‘Angelick crea-
‘ture!’ cried he, with a voice and eyes
all transport; ‘Oh! that I had the op-
‘portunity of throwing myself at your
‘feet, to thank, as it deserves, this
‘goodness! Where—when—shall we
‘meet again?’

‘The paper I gave you will inform
‘you,’ replied she; ‘but do not dis-
‘appoint Lady Hardy in the same man-
‘ner as you did Celia of the Woods.’
—‘Oh, I can clear myself of that!’
cried he: ‘it was a sad necessity that
‘drove me from you; and I had no
‘means of conveying a letter to you;
‘but I have sought you since.’—‘And
‘I have sought you too,’ rejoined she:
‘but we must talk of this hereafter; I
‘see my woman coming. Leave me,
‘for Heaven’s sake! And if you stay in
‘the walks, pass carelessly by, and
‘seem not to regard me.’ Jemmy had
only time to tell her that he would read
the dear mandate, and obey whatever
it enjoined.

After speaking these words, he re-
tired, with as much haste as he could,
to the other end of the walk; where he
examined what had been given him by
the lady, and found it contained only
these few expressive lines.

‘GO,

‘GO, at six this evening precisely, to Mrs. Comode, the habit-maker, in *** Street: she is already apprized of your coming, but knows not your person; so you have only to say you come for the ribband; on which she will immediately conduct you to
‘Yours, &c.’

It has been observed through the course of this history, that Jemmy, in spite of his gay temper, had sometimes the power of thinking very seriously. The billet he had in his hand, together with the looks and gestures of the lady, filled him with reflections which, it cannot be supposed, she either intended or wished to inspire.

To find that the most timid bashfulness, the most innocent simplicity of mind and manners, thus improved, in the compass of so small a space of time, into all the assured airs of a woman who had passed her whole life in artifice and intrigue, seemed to him a thing so strange, so out of nature, that he would never have believed it possible, had he not seen it verified in the character of his Celia, at present Lady Hardy.

This transformation did not render her more amiable in his eyes: he was, however, punctual to the assignation; though, it is pretty certain, his curiosity of knowing those accidents which had occasioned so extraordinary a revolution, both in her circumstances and behaviour, had as great a share in carrying him thither as any other motive.

On his coming to Mrs. Comode's, he found the obliging gentlewoman ready to receive him; and, on his giving the appointed signal, led him, with a smiling countenance, into a back-parlour behind the shop, where Lady Hardy already waited his approach.

He was doubtless about to salute her with some fine speech; but she no sooner saw him enter, than, starting from her seat, she threw herself at once into his arms, before they were even open to receive her. ‘My dear, dear Mr. Jessamy!’ cried she, with an undefinable softness in her voice and eyes, ‘a few days past how little did I hope for this happiness!’

Such love, such tenderness, in one so young and beautiful, must have warmed the heart of a dull stoick, much more that of one endowed by nature with the

most amorous inclinations. Jemmy must have been as insensible as he was really the reverse, had he not felt the force of such united charms. He returned all her transports, her caresses, with interest: they said the most passionate and endearing things to each other; but the energy of their expressions, as they were so often interrupted with kisses and embraces, would be lost in the repetition; for, as Mr. Dryden justly says—

‘Imperfect sentences, and broken sounds,
‘And nonsense, is the eloquence of love.’

After the first demonstrations of their mutual joy on this meeting were over—‘I will not,’ said she, ‘be so ungenerous to accuse you of a crime of which I know you clear. I discovered the melancholy occasion which called you in such haste to London: but tell me, my dear Jessamy,’ continued she, ‘did not your heart feel some anguish on finding yourself obliged to leave your Celia just as you had prevailed upon her to swear she would be yours?’

He could not, without being guilty of as much ill manners as ingratitude, avoid pretending he had suffered greatly on that account: but, whatever was wanting of sincerity in this assertion, he atoned for in the relation he made her of the pains he had taken in searching for her on his return to Oxford.

She laughed heartily at the detail he gave her of the conversation he had with the countryman concerning her uncle Adams, and the affairs of his family: ‘And now,’ said she, ‘I will make you the confidante of every thing that has happened to me since I had the pleasure of seeing you.’

Jemmy then telling her it was a favour for which he had the utmost impatience, she immediately gave him the satisfaction he desired.

C H A P. XXIV.

THE HISTORY OF CELIA OF THE WOODS, PROSECUTED IN THAT OF LADY HARDY, AND RELATED BY HERSELF TO JEMMY.

‘I Will not,’ said she, ‘poison the sweets of our present moments with any description of the bitter pangs I suffered in not finding you,
‘25

‘ as I expected, in the wood : I had too much dependance on your love and honour to entertain one thought that this disappointment was an act of your own choice ; and therefore feared that you was either suddenly taken sick, or that some other ill accident had befallen you.

‘ Under these apprehensions I passed the most cruel night that ever was ; nor did the day bring me much more tranquillity : though I sometimes flattered myself that business, company, or some such-like enemy to love, had kept you from me the evening before, and that you would not fail on this to come and make atonement for the disquiet you had given me.

‘ Accordingly, in this hope, I went, about the usual hour, to the dear scene of our past meetings : I threw myself on the little hillock where we had sat ; I kissed, I embraced, the tree you had leaned against ; I invoked Love and all it’s powers to bring my Jessamy once more to my arms ; and ran to the entrance of the wood, and vainly still expected your approach. I envied the little birds that hopped among the boughs above my head ; and wished to be one of them, that I might fly to the place which I then thought contained you, and see in what manner you were employed.

‘ I had like to have forgot,’ continued she, ‘ I promised that I would not trouble you either with my grief or my despair ; yet I am unwarily running into a detail of both. Pardon me, my dear Jessamy, and prepare to hear what contrivances my passion for you inspired me with.

‘ It was almost dark when I left the wood : my uncle was come out of the grounds, and at home before me ; he chid me for being abroad so late ; but I made an excuse which, though not worth your hearing, passed well enough upon him. I rose very early the next morning, and wrote a little letter to you ; but, when I had done, knew not which way to convey it to you ; nor, indeed, how to direct it properly, as I had never heard you say to which of the colleges you belonged.

‘ Resolved, however, at any rate, and whatever I did, to be satisfied concerning your health, and what was

‘ become of you, I went to Oxford, under pretence of buying something I stood in need of. I was afraid and ashamed to go to the university, and ask for you ; but believing that you must be known in town, enquired at several great shops, but without any success, till a perriwig-maker directed me to go to a coffee-house, which he said you used every day.

‘ Here I was informed, that you had been sent for to London, on account of your father’s indisposition, and was gone the day before ; but that not having quitted the university, it was expected you would not long be absent. This intelligence a little comforted me, and I returned with a satisfaction in my mind, which I believe might spread a more than ordinary glee upon my countenance.

‘ But, however it was, my looks, it seems, were that day ordained to do for me what I never had vanity enough to expect from them.

‘ On my coming home, I found a chariot, with two footmen, waiting at our door, and within a very old grave gentleman busy in discourse with my uncle ; the latter had some time before got a slip from a fine exotic plant out of a nobleman’s garden, which he had reared to such perfection, that it was now loaded with flowers ; and it was concerning the purchase of this, and some other curiosities my uncle’s nursery afforded, that had brought this guest to our house.

‘ I fancy, my dear Jessamy, that you already imagine that the person I am speaking of was no other than Sir Thomas Hardy, whose wife I now am, and who you saw yesterday with me at the auction : it was he indeed, whose heart, without designing it, I captivated at first sight.’

Jemmy on this could not forbear making compliments on the force of her charms ; to which she only replied, that of how great service soever they had been to her interest, she took no pleasure in looking lovely in any eyes but those of her dear Jessamy ; and then went on with her discourse.

‘ The old baronet,’ resumed she, ‘ had his eyes fixed upon me from the moment I came into the room, and soon took an opportunity of asking my uncle if I was his daughter. “ No,

"please your honour," replied he, "she is only my niece. Farmer Adams, one of your honour's tenants, is her father."

"Oh, then," cried Sir Thomas, "I suppose he has sent her hither to be out of the way of some handsome young man or another whom she may have taken a liking to."—"No, please your honour," said my uncle, "I hope the girl has no such thoughts in her head as yet: my brother only lets her be here, out of kindness to me, to look after my house."

"A very pretty housekeeper indeed," rejoined Sir Thomas; "and I do not doubt but she manages as well as can be expected."—"For her years, Sir," said my uncle. "I dare swear she does," cried my new lover; "and, were it not for robbing you, I should be glad to have such a one to look after my affairs."

"I could not forbear blushing excessively at these words; though I was far from imagining he had any design in them: he said no more, however, at that time; but having ordered my uncle to bring home the plants he had bought of him, went into his chariot, though not without giving me a very amorous look as he passed by."

"For my part, I should have thought no more of this stuff afterwards, but was very much surprized when I saw him come again the next day; my uncle happened to be abroad, and I was sitting alone at work in a little room just by the door, which was wide open, and he came directly in."

"Where is your uncle, my pretty maid?" said he; "I would buy some things of him." I replied, that I believed he was not far off, and would call the boy to go in search of him.—"It is no matter," returned he, taking hold of my hand to prevent my doing as I had said; "and, to tell you the truth, I am glad of this opportunity of saying something to you that may be for your advantage."

"I wondered what he meant; but sat down again on his bidding me: he then told me I was a pretty maid, and would be more pretty still, if I was dressed as I ought to be. "It is a pity," said he, "that such limbs as these should be employed in any

hard or servile work. I know very well, that neither your father nor your uncle are able to do much for you; therefore, if you will be one of my family, you shall eat and drink of the best, have fine cloaths, and have no business but to see that the servants do theirs."

To all this I answered, that I was very much obliged to his honour for the offer he made me, but that I was not accustomed to the ways of gentlemen, and in no respect qualified for the place he mentioned.

"Yes, my dear girl," cried he, "you are sufficiently qualified for every thing I shall require of you." In speaking these words, he threw his withered arms about my neck, and kissed me with a vehemence which one would not think his years capable of.

"I protest to you," continued she, "that I was so foolish as not to apprehend the base design he had upon me, till this last action convinced me of it. I struggled, and got loose from an embrace which was then so detestable to me; I told him that I was not for his purpose, and that I never would be the wicked creature he would have me."

"You are a little fool, and do not consider the value of the offer you reject," said he, throwing a handful of guineas into my lap. "See here; your pocket shall be always filled with these, to dispose of as you think fit; you shall have what you please, do what you please, command me and my whole estate; I desire only a little love in recompense."

"I despise all you can give or promise," answered I; "therefore take back your gold, or I shall throw it out of doors, for your servants to pick up: poor as I am, I will not sell my honesty."

"It was not in this manner, my Jessamy," pursued she, looking fondly on him, "that I withstood the attempts you made upon my virtue. How wide is the difference between love and interest! My old baronet, however, took my behaviour as the effect of the most pure and perfect virtue; he was both amazed and charmed with it; and, approaching me with looks as respectful as they had lately been presuming—" Well, my lovely maid," said he "I will

"not

“not henceforward go about to seduce your innocence: I love you; but will endeavour to conquer my desires.”

“I answered in a tone pretty rude, I believe, that it was the only thing he could oblige me in; on which he stood in a considerative posture for some moments: at last, coming out of it—“Celia,” said he, looking earnestly on my face, “it is my desire to do every thing to oblige you; and, since that will do it, shall come here no more.” With these words he turned from me, and it was with much ado I prevailed on him to take up his money; but I protested a single piece should not remain behind.”

Her ladyship was going on, but Mrs. Commode, who was all complaisance, came in with tea, which occasioned a small interruption; after which she resumed her discourse, as will be seen in the next chapter.

C H A P. XXV.

CONTAINS THE SEQUEL OF LADY HARDY'S STORY, WITH OTHER MATTERS OF SOME CONSEQUENCE.

AFTER my old baronet had left me,” said she, “and I had leisure to reflect on what had passed, though I was far from repenting of having refused the offer he had made of living with him; yet, to confess the truth, I thought there was no necessity for giving myself the grand airs I had done, and that I might have taken the gold he would have forced upon me, without any breach either of my modesty or virtue: but this it was which, as he has since told me, gave him so high an opinion of my spirit and delicacy, as made him think me worthy of the dignity he was determined to raise me to.

“The third day after that in which he had been with me, a man and horse arrived from my father, with orders to bring me home directly. I cannot tell whether myself or uncle were most surprized at this message, but am certain that both of us were very much so. “Sure,” said he, “brother does not intend to take her from me without letting me know, that I might provide for myself.”

“I can say nothing to that,” replied the fellow; “but I believe she will not come back in haste; for he bid me tell her she must bring all the things away that she has here.” This convincing him that my father had indeed taken it into his head to keep me at home, he complained bitterly of his unkindness, and asked the man a thousand questions concerning my being sent for so suddenly away, in none of which the other was able to give him any satisfaction.

“I was all this while in tears, which my uncle, poor man, imputed to my good-nature and sorrow for leaving him thus destitute; but, alas! they proceeded from a cause very different from what he imagined, that of being obliged to remove so much farther from the only place where I could ever hope to see my dear Jessamy again.

“But there was no remedy; the orders I had received must be submitted to: I therefore went up to my room; packed up my little wardrobe, which I gave to the man to put before him; took leave of my uncle; got upon the pillion; and, with an aching heart, trotted towards home as fast as the horse, thus loaded, could carry us.

“On my arrival, I found my father waiting at the door to receive me: he lifted me off the horse himself; kissed me; said I was a good girl for making such haste to come when he sent for me: in fine, I never remember to have seen him in such a humour in my whole life. My mother was the same: she caught me in her arms as soon as she saw me, and cried—“My dear Celia, thou wert born to be a blessing to us all!” I was strangely surprized at all this complaisance and joy; but as my parents made many circumlocutions in their discourse before they informed me of the motive, I will tell it you in a more brief manner.

“Sir Thomas Hardy, it seems, had been with my father; told him he had seen me at my uncle’s; that he liked me; and, if he would give his consent, would marry me, as soon as things could be got ready for that purpose. You may be sure my father did not make many words to this bargain: and it was agreed between them, that I should be immediately

‘ sent for home, in order to be clothed according to the station I was going to enjoy.

‘ The astonishment I was in at hearing all this is impossible to be expressed; I shall therefore only say, that it was such as almost turned my brain, and for a good while allowed me not the power of knowing whether I was most pleased or troubled at an event so prodigious.

‘ Early the next morning a servant belonging to my lover brought me a portmanteau, in which I found several rolls of various coloured silks; a great deal of lace and Dresden work, with some pieces of Holland of an extraordinary fineness: in the portmanteau was also a small ivory casket, containing a gold repeating watch and equipage; a set of diamond buckles for my stays; a large pearl necklace with a solitaire, and several other trinkets of a considerable value.

‘ You may believe,’ continued she, that my eyes were dazzled with the sight of such things as I had never seen in my whole life before; but I had scarce time to examine them thoroughly before Sir Thomas came himself to visit me: he told me he was glad to see me at home, and asked me how I liked the presents he had made. I was very much confounded; but had courage enough to reply, that I liked them very well, especially as they were accompanied with honourable intentions. This answer pleased him so much, that he could not forbear taking me in his arms, though my father and mother were in the room, saying at the same time—“ My dear girl, I have nothing for thee but the most honourable intentions; and what I have given thee now are mere trifles in comparison of what I will hereafter make thee mistress of.”

‘ He staid with us near two hours; and, before he went away, gave my mother fifty guineas, to pay for making my cloaths, and to provide for me such other things as she should find necessary, earnestly recommending to her to get all ready for our marriage with as much speed as possible.

‘ He might have spared himself the trouble of this injunction; for never were two people more eagerly anxious for any thing than my poor father and mother to see me disposed of in a

‘ manner so infinitely beyond all they could have hoped. The persons employed in equipping me were so much pressed, and so well paid, that in a very few days nothing was wanting for my nuptials, which were celebrated by the parson of the parish at my father’s house; after which I was carried to that which is now my home, and as pleasant a seat as any in the whole county.

‘ During the first week of our marriage, my head was so taken up with the coach and six; number of my servants; the magnificence of every thing about me; the title of my Ladyship; and the compliments made on that occasion; that I thought of nothing but my new grandeur: but all these things became less dazzling to me as they grew more customary; and all my relish for them vanished with their novelty.

‘ The idea of my dear Jessamy now returned to my remembrance; I sighed; I languished; and thought I could have exchanged all my present opulence for one soft hour of love with that first and only charmer of my soul.

‘ My husband’s fondness for me increased every day; but, alas! the endearments of a man of his years are rather disgustful than agreeable; and I have often wished, that as it is impossible I should ever have any love for him, that he had less for me, in spite of the advantages I receive by it.

‘ In this manner, my dear Jessamy,’ added she, ‘ I passed two whole years, quite hopeless of ever tasting more substantial joys, till business calling Sir Thomas to London, chance has blest me with the sight of him who never has been absent from my mind.’

Jemmy, perceiving she had done, thanked her for the gratification of his curiosity, and the share he had in her remembrance; and then reminded her, that at the last meeting in the wood she had made a promise to him, which he had now a right to claim the performance of.

‘ If I had not intended to pay my debt,’ replied she with a smile, ‘ I should certainly have avoided the presence of my creditor.’—‘ When, then,’ cried he, ‘ where shall we meet? for I suppose this is no proper place for the continuance of our interviews.’

‘ You are mistaken,’ said she; ‘ Mrs. Comode

‘Comode and I know each other perfectly well; Sir Thomas carried me to Tunbridge last year; she kept a shop there at that time; I bought all my things of her, and we soon grew very intimate; on my coming to town I renewed my acquaintance with her; and am very sure of her readiness to oblige me in every thing I desire.’

‘It falls out a little unlucky, indeed,’ pursued she, ‘that we could not go up stairs to-day; but it seems some other company had appointed to drink tea there before Mrs. Comode knew any thing of our coming.’

He then begged she would prefix a time for their happy meeting: on which she told him, that she was to go the next morning to see Windsor Castle, and that Sir Thomas proposed staying there two or three days; but that as soon as they returned, he might be sure she would fly to her dear Jessamy, with a transport at least equal to his own.

‘But how shall I be apprised,’ cried he; ‘how know when to expect the blissful moment?’—‘I have a contrivance for that,’ answered she; ‘I will send a little note to Mrs. Comode, which you may either call for here, or she shall leave for you on your giving her your directions.’

‘I will not give her that trouble,’ said he, ‘nor fail to wait on her every morning till the dear mandate shall arrive,’—‘Then I will take care,’ rejoined she, ‘to send the evening before, in order to prevent you from being previously engaged elsewhere.’

Jemmy was beginning to express himself in a very tender manner on this occasion, when the door immediately flew open, and a lady rushed into the room; perceiving company there, she staid not a quarter of a minute, yet long enough to put them both into a good deal of confusion, especially Jenny, who by his momentary glance, discovered she was one whom he had often seen with Jenny.

This was, indeed, that same officious friend, who had told Jenny the manner in which she had surprized him; but had he known with what moderation that lady received the intelligence, it would have added, if possible, to the love and admiration he had for her.

But whatever vexation this accident might give him on his own account, he took care to conceal it under the ap-

pearance of his great concern for the reputation of his dear Lady Hardy, who, after the first hurry of her spirits was over, seemed perfectly easy, and endeavoured to make him so, saying, that as she had been but three weeks in town, and knew very few people in it, she did not apprehend any danger from this intrusion.

He gave but little attention to what she said on this subject; second thoughts made him repent his promise of calling every day at Mrs. Comode’s, as there was more than a possibility of being met there again by the lady who had just left them, or of being seen by some other of Jenny’s acquaintance.

As soon as Mrs. Comode had got rid of her customer, she came in and made an apology for what had happened, by relating the accident of the garter, as the lady had told it her, assuring them withal, that the next time they did her the honour of a visit, she would take care they should not be interrupted.

Lady Hardy then told her, they had been settling a correspondence together, and was going to say in what manner it was to be conducted; but Jemmy prevented her, by crying out—‘Hold, Madam, business or company may detain me from receiving your ladyship’s commands so soon as they arrive. I should be glad, therefore, that Mrs. Comode would be at the pains to send them directly to me.’

The obliging shop-keeper replied, that she should always take a pleasure in serving Lady Hardy, or any of her friends; on which he told her his name, and that of the street wherein he lived.

After this nothing material passed; and Lady Hardy not judging it proper to stay abroad too long, the lovers separated with a mutual expectation of seeing each other again at the same place in a few days.

CHAP. XXVI.

WILL, IN SOME MEASURE, CONTRIBUTE TO RECONCILE JEMMY TO THOSE WHO MAY HAVE BEEN OFFENDED WITH HIM.

HOW much soever Jemmy might be envied by the young amorous sparks of the town for the adventure he was now engaged in, yet certain it is he

he felt less satisfaction in it than might have been expected, either from his own years and warmth of constitution, or from the beauty and love of his mistress.

Celia of the Woods, it is true, had at first sight inspired him with very strong desires; but then it was a transient flame, a sudden flash of inclination, which ceased on being absent from the object; the idea of her charms had been long since forgot; and if it returned, on finding her again in the person of Lady Hardy, it was but a faint resemblance of what he felt before, and could be called little more than the ghost of his first passion.

The reason of this is pretty evident; there is a charm in innocence more attracting to a nice and delicate heart than any other perfection whatsoever: the harmless simplicity of the rural maid was not only now all lost in the fine lady, but exchanged for a certain boldness of looks and behaviour, and a spirit for intrigue, no way engaging to the penetrating Jemmy.

Besides, it must be remembered, that when he first saw Celia he was two years younger, and consequently had less solidity, and, perhaps, a less sensibility of the merits of Jenny than he has since acquired, by being a more constant witness of them: to this may also be added, that an amour with Lady Hardy was not a thing of his own seeking, but rather in a manner forced upon him; a circumstance which, in most men, would have destroyed a great part of the relish for it.

From all that has been said, it may very justly be concluded, that Jemmy considered the affair he was entering into only as a mere matter of amusement for his senses, without allowing it any share in the affections of his mind; and it is a point which might bear some dispute, whether, had the business which so long detained him in London been completed, he would have staid one day longer in respect to Lady Hardy, or have rather chose to have gone directly down to Bath.

An accident altogether unexpected, however, prevented him from being put to the trial, and left him not at liberty to do either the one or the other, by snatching him away at once from the pursuit both of his honourable and dishonourable flame.

The business he had so much complained of was adjusted while Lady Hardy was at Windsor, and he now had it in his power either to wait her return to London or to go down to Bath: he was, perhaps, debating within himself which of these two he should do, when he received a billet from Mrs. Comode, with a small piece of paper inclosed in it; that from Mrs. Comode contained these lines.

‘ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

‘ HONOURED SIR,

‘ I Just now have received the inclosed
‘ from the lady you know of: it
‘ was brought by her footman, unsealed as you see, and addressed to me to prevent suspicion: her ladyship has a world of wit; but you will easily comprehend the meaning, and not fail to favour with your company, at the appointed hour, those who so much desire it. I am, with the profoundest respect, honoured Sir, your most devoted, and most faithful servant,

‘ B. COMODE.

‘ P. S. You may depend, Sir, that
‘ every thing shall be ordered so
‘ as you may be here in all the
‘ privacy you can wish.’

In the other piece of paper he found these words.

‘ TO MRS. COMODE.

‘ DEAR MRS. COMODE,

‘ I Came last night from Windsor, and
‘ am in prodigious want of a new
‘ robe de chambre, for I am quite
‘ weary and sick of those I have by me;
‘ therefore pray get me some patterns
‘ of silks, such as you think I shall
‘ like. I will be with you to-morrow
‘ at five o’clock precisely, to make my
‘ choice. I am, dear Comode,
‘ yours,

‘ HARDY.’

‘ P. S. Be sure you do not fail to
‘ get the silks ready against I
‘ come.’

Whatever uncertainty his mind was in before, this turned the balance, and he sent his compliments by the bearer

to Mrs. Comode, with an assurance that he would wait on her as she desired: but he had scarce dispatched this message, when a footman belonging to one Mr. Ellwood came to let him know his master entreated his company immediately at his house, on business of the utmost importance.

This Mr. Ellwood was one of those gentlemen who had been appointed by Jemmy's father for the trustees and guardians of his minority. He was a man of great fortune, great abilities, and yet greater integrity: our young hero had a thousand obligations to him, particularly in relation to that perplexing affair he had lately been involved in, and which he could not so easily have accomplished without his kind assistance.

The eldest son of this worthy person had been a fellow collegian with Jemmy: they had lived together in the most perfect harmony while at the university; nor had the friendship between them slackened since their quitting it. They had not now seen each other for a considerable time, the old gentleman, who lived for the most part at his seat in Bedfordshire, having sent for his son, in order to make his addresses to a young lady of that county, an heiress to a large estate.

The attachment Jemmy had to this family made him presently comply with the summons that had been sent him. Mr. Ellwood hearing he was come, met him at the top of the stairs, and with a countenance which expressed the inward satisfaction of his mind—'Dear Mr. Jessamy,' cried he, 'I have news to tell you, which I am certain you will participate in the joy of; my boy has gained his point, the lady has consented, and we must go and see them tacked together.'

Jemmy had heard much talk of this courtship, and that it went on very successfully, but did not think it had been so near a conclusion: he expressed, however, the interest he took in so felicitous an event in terms the most obliging and sincere.

'I doubt not,' said Mr. Ellwood, 'but the goodness of your heart makes you pleased with every thing that gives pleasure to your friends: but this is not all we require of you; Harry must needs have you as a witness of his marriage; he presses me

'to engage you to accompany me to Ham-Hall; and here is a letter for you, which he sent inclosed in mine; I have not been so curious or so ill-mannered as to open it; but I suppose it is on the account I mention: pray, see whether I am mistaken.'

Jemmy having taken the letter out of his hand, instantly broke the seal, and read aloud as follows—

'TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

'DEAR FRIEND,

'I Have now done with hopes, fears, and suspense; the angel I so long solicited has at last consented to be mine, and I am shortly to enjoy a happiness which can have no alloy but the want of your presence.

'I would fain flatter myself, that the earnest desire I have to see you on this blest occasion will be sufficient to bring you to Ham-Hall; but lest I should be too vain in this point, have entreated my father, whose influence is questionless more powerful, to omit nothing which may engage you to accompany him; and in expectation remain, with the greatest sincerity, dear Jessamy, your most affectionate friend, and very humble servant,

'H. ELLWOOD.'

This invitation very much disconcerted Jemmy: the regard he had for those that made it, rendered him very unwilling to deny, and the double obligation he had laid himself under, first of meeting Lady Hardy at Mrs. Comode's, and secondly of going down to Bath, made him not well know how to comply.

Mr. Ellwood, on perceiving he paused and seemed in some dilemma, told him he would have no denial, and remonstrated to him that he could have no engagements in town with any persons who were more truly his friends than those that now desired his company in Bedfordshire.

Jemmy was a little ashamed at the reluctance he had shewn to this journey, and could find no better excuse for it than that which was indeed the chief motive, his having promised Jenny to follow her to Bath, and the expectation he knew she was in every day of seeing him arrive.

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'If that be all,' cried the old gentleman, 'the difficulty is easily removed; you have only to write to her, and relate the occasion that keeps you from her somewhat longer than you intended; and I will answer for her she has good-nature enough to pardon you.'

Jemmy being still desirous of finding some excuse to avoid this invitation, repeated the discourse he had with Mr. Morgan, and the report which was spread about town in relation to his supposed infidelity to Jenny, urging the necessity of his being with her before she should hear any thing of it.

Mr. Ellwood laughed at the apprehensions he discovered on this account; replied, that it was not likely that such an idle story should be told her, especially while she remained at so great a distance from the place where it was invented: 'But in case,' continued he, 'any malicious person should convey the scandal to her, as the thing is utterly without foundation, it may be easily disproved when you come together, and she would allow it a weakness in herself to have given credit to it.'

This, with some other arguments, assisted by Jemmy's own unwillingness to disoblige him, soon decided the matter; and as Mr. Ellwood said he purposed to set out early the next morning, Jenny's lover took his leave to make what preparations were necessary for his departure, as well as to give an account to both his mistresses of what had happened.

C H A P. XXVII.

CONTAINS, AMONG OTHER PARTICULARS, A MORE FULL EXPLANATION OF JEMMY'S INNOCENCE IN SOME THINGS WHICH HAD VERY MUCH THE APPEARANCE OF BEING CRIMINAL.

JEMMY had no sooner taken leave of Mr. Ellwood, than he wrote to Lady Hardy, telling her, that an unavoidable necessity had torn him from his wishes; that he was compelled to go into the country the next morning, and consequently must be deprived of the pleasure of meeting her, as he had hoped, according to appointment; but

added, that he should return in a very short time, and then enjoy the happiness he languished for. This he inclosed in another to Mrs. Comode, with an entreaty that she would convey it as directed with all expedition and secrecy.

That necessary friend discharged the trust reposed in her with so much diligence, that on his coming home pretty early from Vauxhall, where he had been that evening with some company, he found a letter from Mrs. Comode, with another inclosed in it from Lady Hardy, in answer to his billet; the contents of both were as follow.

'TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

'HONOURED SIR,

I Know not what you will find in the inclosed, though it was wrote at my house, and I saw it wetted with tears, falling from a pair of the most beautiful eyes in the world. I doubt not, however, but you will soon dry them up: it would, indeed, be a great pity, that two such charming persons should have any cause of complaint against each other. You will pardon this freedom, as it springs from my zeal for your future happiness, to which you may assure yourself I shall always be proud to contribute; being with the most profound respect, honoured Sir, your very faithful, and obsequious servant,

'B. COMODE.'

By this prelude he easily guessed what was the purport of the other, so was not surprized at the reproaches it contained.

'TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

'SIR,

I Have just now received yours by the hands of Mrs. Comode; and Sir Thomas being abroad, I have the opportunity of disburdening myself of some part of that mingled astonishment and grief your cruel epistle has involved me in. Oh, Mr. Jessamy! how can you treat with such indifference a woman who loves you to distraction! Nothing but yourself could ever made me believe you were capable of behaving towards me in this manner. Is this the effect of all
'your

‘ your soft expressions? Is this the recompence of the fondness I have shewn to you? You find me ready to risk every thing for you, virtue, duty, reputation; nay, the dangers of eternal ruin are too weak to deter me from flying into your arms: should any other engagement, then, any business, any pleasure, have the power to snatch you from me? The excuses you make might have passed well enough with me when I was the ignorant unjudging Celia of the Woods; but time, reading, and observation, has now informed me better; and I know what a woman has a right to expect from the man who has a real passion for her; but I see you are insensible, ungrateful, yet still I love you; and, in spite of my resentment, cannot help wishing you a prosperous journey, and a safe return. You promise me that it shall be speedy; but I know not how to give credit to your words: the sooner you come back, however, the more you will be entitled to the forgiveness of your too much devoted

‘ CELIA.’

‘ P. S. Sir Thomas talks of staying in London all next winter. This would be joyful news to me indeed, if I could flatter myself with a belief you wished it so; but dare not hope too much, after the cruel disappointment you have given me.’

Till the receipt of this, Jemmy thought he had done with Lady Hardy till his return from Bedfordshire; but he now found himself under a necessity either of writing to her again, or of giving her cause to complain of his want of politeness as well as love.

With the pleasures of an amorous intrigue there will be always some mixture of fatigue. Jemmy loved to enjoy the one, but was not of a humour to endure much of the other, especially at present; and the tender reproaches and accusation in this letter seemed to him so many impertinences, which he would gladly have been able to dispense with himself from answering.

He was also obliged to write to Jenny that same night, in order to give her an account of the motive that carried him to Ham-Hall, at the very instant he was

about to gratify his inclinations in following her to Bath; but this was a task which he was far from feeling any reluctance in the performance of: so widely different are the effects of an honourable and a dishonourable passion!

This put me in mind of a very just, as well as beautiful, hieroglyphick, which I once saw among the paintings of Titian. The capital figures in the piece were two Cupids, the one coming down from Jupiter in a milk-white robe, his sparkling eyes wide open, and garlands in his hands, of fresh and unmixed sweets, ready to crown the brows, of every faithful votary: the other in a garment of a dusky yellow, spattered all over with black, seemed ascending from the earth; condensed vapours encircled his head, a bandage covered his eyes, and in his impure hands were wreaths of half-shed faded roses, thinly blended with thorns and prickly briars.

The ancients were extremely fond of expressing their designs by emblems; and this custom, which is as old as the Syriac and Chaldean, is still retained, throughout the greatest part of Europe, in the devices on their shields; so that, by looking on the escutcheon of any family, it is easy to know for what great action it was at first distinguished. And this, methinks, should remind those who wear them to act in such a manner as may render themselves worthy of the honours acquired for them by their progenitors; otherwise they are no more, according to the words of a late author, than—

‘ Dignify’d dregs of Britain’s fallen race,
‘ Honour’s dishonour, and Fame’s last disgrace.’

But this is not a work in which remonstrances are to be expected, nor perhaps would be greatly relished; I shall therefore leave the world such as it is, and, without being much of a prophet, one may say, is like to be, and return to the subject of my history.

Jemmy wrote a long letter to his dear Jenny; in which he acquainted her with all the particulars relating to the journey he was about to take, in compliance with Mr. Ellwood’s invitations; and expressed the utmost discontent at an accident which hindered him from

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going to Bath so soon as he designed, and hoped to have done.

Having finished this, he set himself about answering the complaint of Lady Hardy; which he did in terms that have no occasion to be repeated, this letter having been already inserted in the fifth chapter of this volume; to which, if the reader takes the trouble to turn back, he will easily perceive to be the same that, by one of the caprices of fortune, fell into the hands of Jenny, and threw her into the condition there described.

Jemmy, in this point, acted like some careless apothecaries, who, by fixing wrong labels on the potions they prepare, frequently destroy one patient by what would have given relief to another: so he, having sealed both the letters before he wrote the superscription of either, directed that he designed for Jenny to Lady Hardy; and, by consequence, that for Lady Hardy to Jenny.

Quite ignorant of the mischief his inadvertency would occasion, he sent a servant with these dispatches; the one to be left at Mrs. Comode's, and the other at the post-house.

About five the next morning, the impatient Mr. Ellwood called on him in his travelling coach. What unwillingness soever he had testified for this expedition, he had taken care that every thing necessary for it should be prepared against the coming of his friend; so being entirely ready, they set out together immediately, attended by the servants belonging to both of them.

The coachman having orders to make all the speed he could, the horses being full of spirit, the road good, and no bad accident retarding the progress of their journey, they arrived at Ham-Hall that same evening; where it is not to be doubted but they were received by the intended bridegroom with all demonstrations imaginable of joy; of duty to the one, and affection to the other.

The wedding was not solemnized till two days after, on account of some writings which had waited for the old gentleman to sign, he having agreed to settle a pretty large estate upon his son at this marriage.

I will not trouble my reader with any description of these nuptials, though they were celebrated with as much mag-

nificence as the rank of the persons, and the place they were in, would admit of, without incurring the censure of vanity and ostentation. Jemmy staid there eight days, and was then obliged to tear himself away from his kind hosts, who would not have suffered him to part so soon but on the score of his impatience to be with Jenny, and the reasons he had given Mr. Ellwood for it.

C H A P. XXVIII.

TREATS OF SUCH THINGS AS THE AUTHOR IS PRETTY WELL CONVINCED, FROM A LONG SERIES OF OBSERVATIONS ON THE HUMAN MIND, WILL AFFORD MORE PLEASURE THAN OFFENCE, EVEN AMONG SOME OF THOSE WHO MOST AFFECT A CONTRARY SENSATION.

HOW strangely ignorant are we of our own hearts! How weak a dependence is there to be placed upon our best resolves! So true is this maxim of Mr. Dryden—

‘Men are but children of a larger growth;
‘Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
‘And full as craving too, and full as vain.’

Who that has heard with what reluctance Jemmy went down to Bedfordshire, the insensibility he expressed for all the gaieties and pleasures of the nuptial feast, and the impatience he had to take his leave of friends who so much desired and valued his company; who, I say, that has been informed of all this, but would have thought that, according to the promise he had made to Jenny in his letter to her from Ham-Hall, he would have done little more in London than just pass through it in his way to Bath?

Yet see the swift vicissitude, and how suddenly the rolling tide of inclination is capable of overturning those designs which even we ourselves have believed were founded on the most solid basis, and impossible to be shaken!

But I will not detain the attention of my readers with any superfluous remarks of my own; the fact I am going to relate will be sufficient of itself to prove the uncertain state of human resolution, and may serve to abate the pride

pride of those who depend too much on their own strength of mind.

Jemmy, who, during his stay in the country, had his whole soul absorbed, as it were, in the thoughts of his dear and deserving Jenny, had no sooner reached London than his stability began to slacken; and, though he did not cease to love her with the same tenderness as ever, yet that burning impatience he had so lately felt to be with her became less fierce on something coming in his way which, till he saw, had almost slipped his memory.

He came to town in a post-chaise: but how his inclinations stood in regard to Lady Hardy, or whether he would have endeavoured to see her before he went to Bath, is altogether uncertain; something, however, happened, which turned the balance on her side, and reminded him both of her and the promise he had made in that letter, which he doubted not but she had received.

He alighted at a coffee-house, which he was accustomed to frequent very much. A stop of coaches happening to be in the street, he saw Sir Thomas and Lady Hardy in one of them, just opposite the door he was going to enter: she saw him too, and gave him a very significant look; which was all the salutation the place and company she was in would allow of.

A young amorous heart, I think, may, with some analogy, be compared to tinder, as it is ready to take fire from every spark that falls. How cool soever Jemmy might have been some moments before, this sight sufficed to revive the glowing embers of desire, and made him think it would not become him to neglect totally so kind and fair a creature.

He supped that night with some company he met at the coffee-house; but resolved to send to her, by the way of Mrs. Comode, the next morning. The impatience of the lady, nevertheless, prevented his intentions; and, on his coming home, he was presented with a letter, which, his people said, had been left for him by a porter above an hour before.

He opened it with some eagerness, not doubting from what hand it came; and found, as he had imagined, the cover from Mrs. Comode, with these lines.

‘ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

‘ HONOURED SIR,

‘ I Send you what, I dare say, will be
‘ a welcome present: your answer
‘ to it, with the utmost expedition, is
‘ requested to be left at my house, as
‘ usual. I beg you, Sir, to believe that
‘ I shall always be ready to oblige you
‘ and the beautiful party to the utmost
‘ of my poor power; being, with the
‘ greatest respect, Sir, your most obe-
‘ dient, and most humble servant, to
‘ command,

‘ B. COMODE.’

The contents of the inclosed were as follow.

‘ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

‘ SIR,

‘ I See you are in town, but am far
‘ from assuring myself you have
‘ any thoughts of me: the violence of
‘ your passion for your charming Jen-
‘ ny, and the hurry you are in to fol-
‘ low her to Bath, may probably have
‘ made you forget that there is such a
‘ person in the world as myself. I send
‘ this, therefore, to desire one more in-
‘ terview, even though it should be to
‘ take an everlasting leave. My happy
‘ rival would not certainly regret your
‘ giving that satisfaction to a woman
‘ who loves you more than, perhaps,
‘ she is capable of doing. Honour and
‘ gratitude demand this from you; to
‘ them I appeal, and shall commit my
‘ cause.

‘ Since you went out of town, I have
‘ another misfortune added to that of
‘ having discovered your engagement
‘ with Jenny: Mrs. Comode has let
‘ her lodgings to a person intimately
‘ acquainted with my husband; so it is
‘ utterly impracticable for me to see
‘ you there; and I am reduced, by this
‘ piece of ill-luck, to desire you will
‘ find out some more proper place for
‘ our meeting. Whether it be at your
‘ own house, or at that of any friend
‘ in whom you can confide, is a matter
‘ of indifference to me; only remem-
‘ ber, that I will not venture to a ta-
‘ vern, bagnio, or any such publick
‘ place.

‘ As I am convinced your heart, if
‘ not wholly lost, is at least divided, I
‘ should have little joy in the continu-

‘ance of an intercourse so dangerous
 ‘to myself, and so negligently pursued
 ‘by you: you need not, therefore, be
 ‘under any apprehensions of my perse-
 ‘cuting you with a passion you seemed
 ‘to have ceased desiring any farther
 ‘proofs of. Happy should I be, in-
 ‘deed, to find myself mistaken in what
 ‘I have so much cause to fear. See
 ‘me once more, however; and fix the
 ‘yet uncertain fate of her who is, with
 ‘too much sincerity, the unkind Jef-
 ‘samy’s still affectionate and devoted

‘CELIA.

‘P. S. If you no longer have any
 ‘love for me, let pity and good-
 ‘nature for that you have inspired
 ‘me with prevail on you not to
 ‘keep me in suspense. I languish,
 ‘I am distracted, till I receive
 ‘your answer, with an appoint-
 ‘ment where and when I shall
 ‘have the opportunity of telling
 ‘you all my soul is full of!’

This passionate epistle gave Jemmy much more pain than pleasure; not that he was either surprized or troubled at the knowledge he found she had of his engagement with Jenny. He was sensible a thousand accidents might reveal it to her; nor did he think she had any

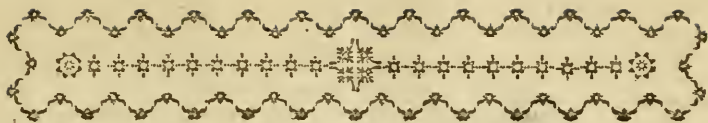
business to interfere with the honourable addresses he made elsewhere; and, had she ever questioned him upon that subject, would not have evaded or denied the truth.

But it vexed him a good deal to find that the providing a place for their meeting was required of him. Whatever amorous intrigues he had hitherto been engaged in, had been accompanied with no difficulties; they had fallen in his way without any pains of his own; he had never been put to the trouble of forming any contrivances for the carrying them on; and the injunction now laid upon him was a thing no less new than disagreeable to him.

Never had he been so much puzzled in his whole life: he judged it highly inconvenient, for many reasons, to make an appointment with her at his own house; and, as she had excepted against all those he should readily have proposed, he might well be at a very great loss to whom he should apply on such an occasion.

What course he took in this perplexing dilemma, and what consequences attended this adventure, as well as the catastrophe of many others mentioned in this work, the reader, if he has patience to wait, will find fully set forth and explained in the succeeding volume.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.




THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
JEMMY AND JENNY JESSAMY.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

CHAP. I.

SHOWS THE CHARACTER OF JEMMY IN A LIGHT WHICH WILL BE THOUGHT WORTHY OF APPROBATION BY SOME READERS, AND EQUALLY RIDICULED BY OTHERS.

OW much soever Jemmy was taken up, on going to bed, with the thoughts of when and where he should meet with his mistress according to her desire, he did not forget, next morning, an appointment he had made to breakfast with a gentleman, in order to look over some curiosities that had been brought from Rome at the last jubilee.

In his way thither, as he was passing by the door of a great mercer, he was surprized with the sight of Lady Hardy starting out upon him; and, before he had time to speak, or, indeed, to think whether he ought to do so in that place or no—‘Well, Mr. Jessamy,’ cried she, in a low voice, ‘what answer may I expect to the letter I sent last night?’—‘Such a one, Madam,’ replied he, ‘as, I hope, will give you no future cause to reproach me.’

‘I should be glad—’ said she, and

was going on; but something, which will hereafter be discovered, prevented her, and she ran back into the shop in the greatest hurry and confusion. Jemmy imagined that the sight of some person who knew her had given her this alarm; but as it was improper to follow her, and he did not chuse to saunter about the street in hopes of speaking to her again, he went directly to the place where he was expected.

He staid no longer at this visit than mere civility required. The task enjoined him by Lady Hardy ran very much in his head, and he could not be easy till he had found some means or other of performing it.

He was returning home so deeply buried in cogitation, that, though he went through the Park, which at that time was very full of company, he saw not nor took notice of any body in it, till Belpine meeting him in his unusual musing, accosted him with a slap on the shoulder, accompanied by these lines, borrowed from Farquhar’s Recruiting Officer—

‘Spleen, thou worst of fiends below,
‘Fly, I conjure thee, by this magick blow!’

‘What, in the name of wonder,’ pursued he, ‘has wrought this transformation? What fair-truel the has the
‘power

‘power to engross you to herself, and make you absent amidst a throng of beauties?’

The sight of him, together with the salutation he had given him, put Jemmy in mind of something he had never thought on before: ‘Faith, Bellpine,’ answered he, laughing, ‘your guess is partly right; I was thinking of a lady, though no cruel one, and just wishing for such a friend as you.’

‘Then here I am a-propos,’ cried the other: ‘what act of friendship am I to be employed in?’—‘Come home with me, and I will tell you,’ replied Jemmy. ‘With all my heart,’ said Bellpine; ‘I will only speak to a couple of gentlemen I see yonder, and be after you in a moment.’

Jemmy was now astonished at his own rudipity: so anxious as he had been to find a proper place for the consummation of his amour with Lady Hardy, yet he had never once thought of having recourse to Bellpine for that purpose, who was a single man, had handsome lodgings, and looked upon by him as sufficiently his friend to oblige him in a much greater matter than the use of his apartment for a few hours.

He walked slowly on, and the other overtook him before he reached his own door. As soon as they were come into the house, and shut up together, Jemmy told him, that having a small affair of gallantry with a woman of condition, who would not venture to any house of public resort, the favour he requested of him was to lend him his lodgings to entertain her in.

To this the other replied, that he was glad of the opportunity of contributing to his pleasures: ‘But,’ said he, ‘we must be very cautious; my landlady, you must know, is a formal piece of stuff, and piques herself mightily on the reputation and honesty of her house, I will therefore sneak privately out before you come, that she may not know that I am abroad; and when my man has shewed you and your fair companion up stairs, he shall tell the old cant that you are relations of mine come to visit me.’

Bellpine looked extremely thoughtful all the time he was speaking, which Jemmy interpreting as the effect of his

great zeal and care that every thing should be conducted to his satisfaction, heartily embraced and thanked him for.

The other grew every moment more serious: but asked him on what day, and what hour, he intended to bring his mistress. ‘That must depend upon herself,’ said Jemmy, ‘and what opportunity chance and our good fortune may befriend us with; but I shall take care to give you timely notice.’

‘I suppose,’ resumed Bellpine, ‘as this affair is to be a mighty secret, I must not be trusted with the name of this fine lady.’—‘No, friend,’ replied Jemmy, ‘you must excuse me there: she is a person of fashion, and a married woman.’—‘Aye,’ returned Bellpine, in a voice scarce articulate, through his inward agitations; ‘and you might have added too, a lewd, a base, and a most ungrateful woman.’

‘What do you mean, Sir?’ demanded Jemmy, somewhat startled at his looks and manner of speaking. ‘Before I answer you,’ cried Bellpine, ‘tell me, I conjure you, by all our friendship, tell me truly, whether you have yet enjoyed her?’—‘No, upon my honour!’ replied the other, still more surprized; ‘but wherefore do you ask? She is perhaps your mistress.’

‘Would to Heaven,’ said Bellpine, ‘that she were mine, or yours, or any man’s mistress, so she were not my uncle’s wife, and dignified with the name of Lady Hardy!’

Never was any one in a greater consternation than Jemmy was on hearing this; he had been told, indeed, somewhat concerning his having an uncle who had married a girl of mean extraction, but knew nothing of his name, or the particulars of the story. ‘What!’ cried he hastily, ‘is Sir Thomas Hardy your uncle?’

‘Yes,’ replied the other sullenly; ‘he is my mother’s brother, and I was always looked upon as his undoubted heir; but by his marriage with this Jezebel I am like to be defrauded of an estate of upwards of two thousand pounds a year.’

Jemmy having by this time a little recovered himself from his surprize, was very much affected at these last words: ‘You shall not be a loser by any act of mine,’ said he; ‘if Lady Hardy were more handsome than she is, and I loved

‘loved her more than I ever did, be assured I would henceforth for ever shun her presence, and forego the gratification of my desires, rather than be guilty of attempting any thing which might happen to prove an injury to my friend.’

‘This is generous, indeed,’ cried Bellpaine, embracing him, ‘and what I could have expected from no man but yourself. You will pardon, dear Sir,’ continued he, ‘the warmth of some expressions I may have let fall; but I cannot keep my temper in due bounds whenever I think on my uncle’s dotage, and the misfortunes I may possibly be reduced to by it.’

After many repeated assurances on the one side, and retributions on the other, Jemmy bethought himself of asking him how it came into his head to guess that Lady Hardy, of all woman kind, was the mistress he had spoke of, and intended to have brought to his lodgings.

‘It can be called, indeed, no more than a conjecture,’ replied Bellpaine, ‘yet was it such a conjecture as amounted almost to a certainty. You know,’ pursued he, ‘that you spoke to her this morning at the door of a shop in Chandos Street; I was sitting in a parlour-window just opposite to it, and had the opportunity of beholding with what hurry of looks and motion her impudent ladyship flew out to meet you; and how presently after conscious guilt and fear at sight of me in turning her head that way, made her leave you, and retire with as much precipitation as she had come out. This,’ went he still on, ‘was enough to give a strange suspicion of your intimacy, and I thought to have asked you by what means you came to be so well acquainted with one of our family: but you prevented me, by making a request which confirmed me in what I had so much reason to believe before; and also that you were entirely ignorant of the near relationship between me and that vile woman.’

‘You do me justice,’ said Jemmy; ‘nothing could be farther from my thoughts than that she was your aunt; I knew her before she had any expectation of being so, and when she was much more innocent than I fear she is at present.’ He then, on the de-

fire of the other, related the manner of his first acquaintance with Celia of the Woods, and the many accidents which had intervened, and hindered the completion of what at that time he so ardently had desired, and she seemed not very averse to grant.

On his having finished this recital—‘When I consider,’ said Bellpaine, ‘what you are, and what she was at the time of her acquaintance with you in the wood, I could almost pity her for not being able, even after marriage, to banish an idea so agreeable, and which had made the first impression on her heart; but, my dear friend, it is not for your sake alone she has transgressed the rules of virtue, and even of decency: others have proved the too great warmth of her constitution; some unquestionable instances of this have come to my knowledge; he assured I speak not this out of malice, nor, in regard of my uncle’s honour, would mention it at all, if I did not think it might serve to fortify you in the resolution you have taken of never seeing her any more.’

A sort of contemptuous smile spread itself all over Jemmy’s face at this supposition: he assured Bellpaine that there was no occasion for any proofs of that lady’s levity to enable him to keep the promise he had made; and that as he never was possessed of any more than a transient inclination for her, he could throw it off without feeling the least pain. ‘Whatever anecdotes, therefore,’ said he, ‘you favour me with, will only serve to gratify my curiosity.’

Bellpaine was, however, preparing to recollect the passages he had to relate; but their discourse had already taken up so much time, that before he could begin, a servant came into the room, and told his master that dinner was upon table. ‘Well, then,’ said Jemmy to his guest, ‘you must do penance with me; a bachelor’s table is always thinly served; but I indulged somewhat too plentifully last night, so mortify to-day with a boiled chicken and small beer.’

In speaking these words he took Bellpaine by the hand, and led him into another room, where it is not to be doubted but that they found more covers already placed than he had made mention of.

CHAP. II.

CONTAINS, BESIDES OTHER MATTERS, SOME FARTHER PARTICULARS RELATING TO LADY HARDY, WHICH SHE DID NOT THINK PROPER TO MAKE ANY MENTION OF TO JEMMY, IN THE DETAIL SHE HAD GIVEN HIM OF HER ADVENTURES.

DINNER was no sooner over, all the appurtenances of it removed, and the servants withdrawn, than Bell-pine began the little narrative he had promised, in these or the like terms:

‘It was always my custom,’ said he, ‘even from my childhood, to go to Oxfordshire, and pay my respects to my uncle three or four times a year; nor did I refrain continuing to give him this mark of my duty and affection after his marriage: though, as you may suppose, it was an event which gave me great uneasiness.’

‘The first time I saw my new aunt, I found her busily employed in learning French, musick, and dancing. She seemed, and I believe really was, no less desirous of becoming mistress of those accomplishments than her fond husband was that she should be so, passing all those hours he suffered her from his presence either in reading some books which he had presented to her, or in the study of the lessons given her by her masters; her behaviour was also full of humility and courtesy: in a word, as much as I was prejudiced against her, which I confess I greatly was, I could see nothing in her to condemn during this visit, which lasted near three weeks, and as unwilling that my uncle should think I took any umbrage at the change of his condition.

‘I went not down again till six months after, having been detained in London by a long fit of sickness, which it was thought would have been my last: but, good God! how strange a transformation had happened in the family in that time! On my arrival, most of the old servants were removed, and new ones in their places; all my aunt’s preceptors were dismissed, and her ladyship, instead of the tractable, obliging creature I had left her, was now grown haughty, sullen, and

reserved; scarce spoke but in her husband’s presence, and then with only an assumed softness. In short, every thing was the very reverse of what it had been, except my uncle himself, and he too, I thought, appeared less cheerful and satisfied than usual.

‘But what the most amazed me was, to find that in the change of domesticks was included an old gentlewoman who had lived with my uncle for seven or eight and twenty years, in quality of a housekeeper, and being a distant relation of my father’s, and reduced by misfortunes to go to service, had been recommended by my mother to take care of his affairs; which trust she so well discharged, and gave my uncle such content, that he used frequently to say, that as long as they both lived, Jamison, for so she is called, and he should never part.

‘I took the liberty of asking my uncle what was become of her; but he only replied, that she was a foolish woman; that he had discharged her; and that he had done with her: I rejoined, that I hoped she had been guilty of nothing to incur his displeasure. “I tell you,” cried he, peevishly, “she is a foolish impertinent woman: say no more about her.” I obeyed; but could not keep myself from putting some questions concerning her removal to those of the servants who had lived there in her time; but could get no other answer from any of them than a shake of the head, or a shrug of the shoulder. All this encreased my wonder; but on hearing she was at present boarded at a little farm-house about three or four miles off, I got one of my uncle’s horses, and went thither one morning, under pretence of riding for the air.

‘Notwithstanding the good creature received me with the greatest joy imaginable, I found the utmost difficulty in prevailing on her to acquaint me with the reason of her having left a place where she had been so useful as well as so much respected; and all I could get from her for a good while was, that Sir Thomas had now no occasion for a housekeeper, having so good a lady, and such like evasive answers; which convincing me there was some mystery in the affair,

‘made

‘made me the more solicitous for an explanation.

‘I pressed, however, in such strong terms, that she at last consented to satisfy me. “Your aunt is a base woman,” said she, “and deserves to be exposed; but as ill as Sir Thomas has used me, I should be sorry that he should be made the jest of the county, therefore would not mention what I am going to relate to any person in the world besides yourself; nor even to you, if I did not know you would be obliged, for your own sake, to keep it secret.”

‘After this, she asked me if I did not remember that the last time I was down, there was a young French Hugonot, who made part of the family, and had been agreed with by Sir Thomas to teach her ladyship the language for two guineas a month and his board. I told her I knew very well there had been such a man, and she proceeded to inform me, that this fellow presently grew a prodigious favourite with Lady Hardy; that she was always praising him, and was so extravagantly silly as even to ask the maids if they did not think Monsieur La Noye was a very handsome man. “This,” said Mrs. Jamison, “occasioned whispers in the family, which were little to her ladyship’s advantage; but, for my part, I really looked upon her behaviour as the effect of simplicity, and not of guilt, as some of them imagined; till happening to go to the best chamber to see if every thing was in order, as I had made it be cleaned the day before, who did I see there but my lady and this La Noye upon the bed together; they had forgot, it seems, to fasten the door, and the posture I surprized them in admitted no doubt of their guilt; I was so thunder-struck, that I had not the power to go either forward or backward, but stood motionless as a stock; the fellow started up, and rushed by me out of the room: my lady, you may be sure, was in confusion enough; she ran to me, threw herself at my feet, burst into tears, and cried—“Dear Jamison, do not betray me!”—“Oh, Madam!” said I, “I never thought to have seen what I have seen.”—“I was half asleep,” rejoined she, “when he came into the room, and I

“scarce knew what I did; therefore, dear Mrs. Jamison, do not ruin me; do not tell Sir Thomas; indeed I will never be guilty of the like again.”

‘I could not forbear interrupting the good woman in this part of her story,” said Bellpine, “by venting my indignation in a volley of curses on the scandal of our family; but she conjured me to moderate my passion, and resolve to shew no future marks of it, or protested she would reveal no further; I gave my promise to do as she desired, and she went on.

“The deceitful creature,” resumed she, “hung about me all the time she was speaking, with such a shew of innocence and grief, that at last, I am ashamed to say it, her tears, her seeming penitence, her humiliation, melted me into pity, and I promised never to mention what I had discovered, on condition she would never repeat her offence; and also that she should make some pretence to Sir Thomas for getting the vile seducer of her honour removed out of the family.

“This she bound herself by the most solemn imprecation to perform; but, alas! one day, another, and another, still came on, and passed away without any proof, or even probability of the sincerity of her conversion; she took care, indeed, not to be surprized in the manner she had been; but I easily saw by Sir Thomas’s behaviour, and some words he let fall in casual conversation, that there was no thought of parting with this French fellow till her ladyship was made perfect in the language.

“I expressed my sentiments very plainly to her on this head, on which she told me that Monsieur had not taken any freedoms with her since the time I caught them together, and that he had sworn never to attempt the like again; and added, that though she would be glad to get rid of him, and could not endure the sight of him, yet she could find no excuse to make to Sir Thomas for leaving off learning French, till she was become mistress of it, which she was far from being as yet.

“This not satisfying me, I renewed my remonstrances to her as often as I had an opportunity; but I soon found,

“ that instead of working the effect I
 “ aimed at, she rather seemed more
 “ hardened by them; every time I
 “ spoke she answered in a more lofty
 “ strain; and at last told me that she
 “ would not be teased; that it was suf-
 “ ficient she did not repeat her fault,
 “ and as for the rest she knew what was
 “ proper to be done, and would not be
 “ kept in leading-strings by any ser-
 “ vant of her husband’s.

“ I now plainly saw, that she was no
 “ less wicked, though more wary, than
 “ she had been; I was troubled at the
 “ shame she would bring upon my mas-
 “ ter, and was debating within my-
 “ self whether or not I should relate
 “ to him the discovery I had made,
 “ and all that had passed upon it between
 “ us, when an unforeseen accident
 “ saved me the pains of thinking any
 “ farther on the matter.

“ Her ladyship, who, as you may
 “ suppose, was never much respected
 “ by the servants, on account of her
 “ birth, became every day less so
 “ through the strong suspicion they
 “ had of her incontinency; but the in-
 “ solence of her gallant was intolerable
 “ to all of them, especially to Hum-
 “ phrey, who being the oldest servant
 “ in the house, except myself, would
 “ not submit to the impertinent com-
 “ mands of that French renegade; this
 “ causing many quarrels, he resolved
 “ to leave Sir Thomas’s service; but,
 “ before he went, had opportunity of
 “ revenging himself on those who were
 “ the occasion of his doing so.

“ I was one morning with Sir Tho-
 “ mas in his closet, settling my ac-
 “ counts, as I always did every month,
 “ when this Humphrey came running
 “ in, and told him that my lady was in
 “ the summer-house at the farther end
 “ of the garden, and desired he would
 “ come to her that minute, for there
 “ was a great curiosity to be seen there.
 “ What little fancy has she got in her
 “ head, I wonder?” said Sir Thomas;
 “ but I will go.”—“ Your honour must
 “ come immediately,” cried the fellow,
 “ or the sight will be gone.”—“ Well,
 “ well,” replied he, “ she must be hu-
 “ moured.” In speaking this he threw
 “ down the papers, and hurried away
 “ as fast as the burden of his years
 “ would let him.

“ I staid some little time in the clo-
 “ set, expecting Sir Thomas would

“ soon return; but finding he did not,
 “ left it, and went down. I had just
 “ got to the bottom of the stairs, when
 “ he came in, followed by my lady,
 “ both of them with countenances
 “ strangely discomposed. “ Sirrah!”
 “ said he, very angrily to Humphrey,
 “ who happened to be in the passage,
 “ how dare you tell me that your lady
 “ wanted to speak with me in the sum-
 “ mer-house?”—“ Sir,” replied the
 “ fellow, with the greatest assurance,
 “ I saw my lady and the young French-
 “ man run thither very fast, so I thought
 “ there might be something very extra-
 “ ordinary to be seen; so made bold to
 “ tell your honour of it.”—“ You are
 “ an impudent rascal!” cried Sir Tho-
 “ mas, and went up stairs, still follow-
 “ ed by my lady.

“ I wondered what all this meant,
 “ but was soon after informed of the
 “ whole matter. The fellow, it seems,
 “ being convinced in his own mind
 “ that my lady and this Frenchman
 “ were too great, had watched all their
 “ motions, and finding that they re-
 “ tired almost every morning into this
 “ summer-house, when they knew Sir
 “ Thomas was reading, or otherwise
 “ employed in his closet, he had taken
 “ this method of giving the injured
 “ husband an opportunity of detecting
 “ them.

“ I did not approve of Humphrey’s
 “ proceeding in this point; and told
 “ him, that let the matter be how it
 “ will, he must not hope to keep his
 “ place after what he had done. He
 “ replied, that he did not care how soon
 “ he was discharged; that he had got
 “ money enough to set up an ale-house,
 “ and would not stay in any service
 “ where he must be insulted by people
 “ no better born than himself, and not
 “ half so honest.”

“ Here,” said Bellpine, “ I could not
 “ forbear interrupting Mrs. Jamison a
 “ second time, by asking her how the
 “ shameful pair behaved on the approach
 “ of my uncle. “ All that can be
 “ known of that part of the story,”
 “ replied she, “ I was told by the gar-
 “ dener, who happened to be at work
 “ very near the place. He said, that
 “ Sir Thomas, on finding the door
 “ made fast, knocked, and called to be
 “ let in; but no answer being made, he
 “ beckoned the gardener to him, and
 “ bid him clamber up to the window,
 “ and

“ and get in that way; but on his attempting to do so, the door was opened by those within, and Sir Thomas having gained entrance, the man withdrew, and went again to his work. He told me that the Frenchman came out in a few minutes, looking very pale and discomposed, and that neither Sir Thomas nor his lady appeared in a much better condition, though they staid some time after, as he supposed, to talk the business over.

“ What passed between them on this score,” pursued Mrs. Jamison, “ is impossible to be known; all that I can tell you is, that Monsieur La Noye was dismissed entirely from the family within two hours after; that my lady either was or pretended to be very sick, and Sir Thomas appeared in a worse humour than ever I had seen him. Humphrey was discharged that same day; and the next day the poor gardener and two other servants, for what reasons I know not, shared the same fate: indeed, I little thought it would also have been mine; but all the distinction I had to boast of from the rest was, to be the last turned off.”

Bellpine was going on, when Jemmy was called suddenly away to a gentleman, who his servant told him was very earnest to speak with him. Who this person was, and what her business, the reader shall not wait long to be informed.

CHAP. III.

IF IT CANNOT BE SAID TO DESERVE ANY ENCOMIUM, IT MUST AT LEAST BE ALLOWED TO STAND IN NO NEED OF AN APOLOGY.

THIS person whom Jemmy had been told was so importunate to see him was no other than Mrs. Comode. Lady Hardy, after having been obliged to leave him so abruptly in the morning, went directly to this woman, and commissioned her to find him either at his own house, or wherever else he could be heard of, in order to excuse her behaviour, by relating the accident which had occasioned it; and also to know of himself if he had thought of a convenient place for their meeting.

This necessary woman delivered her message with the utmost punctuality; and added, that she was extremely sorry for not having at present an apartment to accommodate them with: ‘ But your honour may depend,’ said she, ‘ that nothing in my power shall be wanting to oblige both you and the good lady.’

Jemmy received all this with great coolness, and only told her that Lady Hardy should have a full declaration of his sentiments in a letter that same evening—‘ Which,’ said he, ‘ I will direct under a cover to you, as usual; and, perhaps, will be the last trouble I shall give you.’

She seemed pretty much astonished on hearing him speak in this manner, and was going to make some reply; but he told her he had a friend within whom he could not leave alone any longer, so begged her pardon, and rung the bell for a servant to open the door.

He paused for some moments before he returned to Bellpine, considering whether he should inform him of the visit he had just received; but as he was so nearly interested in the honour of Sir Thomas Hardy, he thought it best not to say any thing to him of an affair which was of no consequence in itself, and would only serve to add to the chagrin he was already in.

The other no sooner saw him re-enter the room, and that he was prepared to give attention to what he had to say, than he resumed his discourse in words to this effect.

‘ There is now little remaining to inform you of,’ said he; ‘ Mrs. Jamison only told me, that for three or four days after La Noye was dismissed, her infamous ladyship kept her chamber; whether by the order of Sir Thomas, or that she was really indisposed, she could not be certain; but during that time her artifices so far prevailed upon him, that he not only discharged all those servants whom he thought had any suspicion of her crime, but also forbade them from ever coming within his doors again on any pretence whatsoever. I then asked her, if she thought my uncle was really convinced of the infidelity of his wife. “ As much as I am myself,” replied she, “ though he will not seem to be so, because the excessive fondness he has for her

"will not suffer him to part from her."

"I rather think," said I, "that he stands in awe of the just ridicule of the world, for having married, at his years, a girl whose conduct obliged him to get rid of in so short a time."

"It may be owing partly to the one, and partly to the other of these motives," answered she; "but however that may be, I can assure you, that he will suffer nobody to come near him, that he imagines has the least suspicion of her virtue."

"This is sufficiently evident in the case of La Noye," added she: "but I can give you another instance since the banishment of her Frenchman; she has been caught in pretty close conference with a young gentleman, who has been for some time a guest at a neighbouring seat. Though Sir Thomas has been told that a fine diamond ring, which her ladyship pretended to have lost, has been seen on the finger of that spark, he only affected to laugh at the intelligence, and has since broke off all acquaintance with the person from whom he received it."

"This is the sum of that account given me by Mrs. Jamison; and I must be in fact as stupid as my uncle affects to be, if I doubted the truth of it. Judge then, my dear friend," continued he, "of the unhappiness of my situation; I am every moment in danger of being deprived of my inheritance by the incontinency of this vile woman; and if I make any attempt to detect her infamy, am equally in danger of losing it by my uncle's displeasure."

Jemmy could not help agreeing with him, that there was, indeed, somewhat extremely precarious in his case; but told him, he ought to console himself with this reflection, that as Lady Hardy had never yet been pregnant, she might, in all probability, not be so while Sir Thomas Hardy lived.

After this the conversation between them turned on various subjects, till Bellpene, having an engagement that evening, took his leave; but before they parted, Jemmy told him, that his business in London being now entirely finished, he intended to set out the next morning for Bath, where he knew Jenny by this time expected him.

Bellpene was not altogether so much chagrined at this intelligence as he would have been some days before; for, though he would have been glad to have kept him from Jenny, yet he was pleased at his removing himself out of the way of Lady Hardy. Men who are themselves deceitful, are always slow in giving credit to the sincerity of others: he had not enough depended on the promise Jemmy had made of breaking off all intercourse with his aunt, till he found him resolved to go from the place she was in, and to which it was not likely he should return till she had left it, as he had heard Sir Thomas say he intended to stay but a few days longer.

But not even this demonstration of his friend's honour towards him had the power of touching his ungrateful heart with any remorse for what he had done, or of obliging him to desist from the prosecution of his wicked attempt to break the union between him and Jenny; as the reader must have observed by the letter he sent to her under the character of a supposed rival, and the invidious hints he threw out in the visit he made her on her arrival in town.

As for Jemmy, he was not much surprized at the account given him of Lady Hardy's conduct: by the little he had seen of her behaviour since his renewing an acquaintance with her in the character she now bore, he was perfectly convinced that she had a great genius, as well as inclination, for intrigues; and had also often imagined that an amour, such as she was about to enter into with him, was not a thing in which she was altogether unpractised. He was not, therefore, sorry that his friendship for Bellpene obliged him to discontinue an amorous correspondence with her; and as it was an affair at present not of his own seeking, and he had given into not through the force of passion, but merely for the sake of amusement, cannot be supposed to give him any pangs in quitting.

He thought it a great pity, however, that a woman, endowed by nature with beauty, wit, and every thing requisite to adorn the station to which she was raised, should know so little how to improve or to deserve the good fortune that had befallen her; and, in this serious humour, remembering the promise he

had

had given to her emissary of making a full declaration of his sentiments by way of letter, sat down immediately, and wrote to her in the following manner.

‘ TO LADY HARDY.

‘ MADAM, .

‘ I Know not how you will relish this epistle; but am very certain you ought to look upon it as the greatest proof both of love and friendship that can be given by man: be not therefore startled, when I tell you I must see you no more. It is for your sake, and yours alone, that I have taken this resolution, and tear myself away from all the joys which beauty, such as yours, has the power of bestowing.

‘ I have well considered the consequences which must infallibly attend your entering into an amorous engagement with me; and find that all the love I could offer in return would be too poor a recompense for those innumerable difficulties and dangers to which you would be perpetually exposed by it.

‘ Exert, then, the whole force of your reason to curb the encroachments of lawless passion in your own heart, and to disdain the shew of it in another; set a true value on yourself, and believe that no man living can deserve that, merely for the gratification of his desires, you should sacrifice your honour, virtue, reputation, peace of mind, and, in short, all that is valuable in your sex.

‘ This advice may appear very odd in a man of my years; but the less you expected it from me, the more impression it ought to make on you. You are not only a wife, but also bound, by a double obligation, to be just. Remember the station for which you were designed by nature, and be not insensible of that to which you are raised by fortune: look round on the magnificence of every thing about you; think to whom you owe it, and let gratitude supply the place of love for a husband who so dearly prizes you. I allow that old age has something in it extremely disagreeable to youth; yet, methinks, the many advantages you enjoy might compensate for that one deficiency; and also re-

mind you, that as Sir Thomas, by the course of nature, cannot long be with you, it is only by observing a proper conduct, while he lives, that you can, after his decease, have any right to expect the honourable addresses of a person capable of making you more happy.

‘ Before I take my leave, I have one thing more to add, though it be a secret which my sex would hardly forgive me for revealing. We are apt to think a woman is never singly kind; that the favours she grants to one, she is equally liberal of to others; and, in this opinion, are seldom very thankful for the blessings we enjoy. If you take this upon the assurance I give you of it, pride will enable you to forbear making the experiment. Farewel! Believe that, though I cease henceforth all correspondence with you, I am, with the best wishes, Madam, your ladyship’s most humble and obliged servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ POSTSCRIPT.

‘ MADAM,

‘ To attempt sending to me again, either by letter or message, will be giving yourself an unprofitable trouble; for, besides the resolution I have made of avoiding a communication which I can neither answer to myself, nor the regard I have for you, I shall infallibly leave this town to-morrow morning.’

This he sealed up, and put under a cover directed to Mrs. Comode; in which he wrote these lines.

‘ MADAM,

‘ PRAY deliver the inclosed with your accustomed care; and you will oblige your humble servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.’

It must be owned, that the advice contained in the above was very good; but whether Jemmy would have acted in this manner if his passion for the lady had been more strong, or his friendship for Bellpine less sincere, is a moot point, and must be left to the decision of the judicious reader.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

CONTAINS A BRIEF RECITAL OF JEMMY'S JOURNEY AND RETURN, WITH SOME OTHER PARTICULARS, WHICH, IF NOT INTERESTING, WILL BE FOUND NECESSARY, HOWEVER, TO BE INSERTED.

THE morning dew was yet upon the grass, when Jemmy, attended by one servant, set out for Bath in a post-chaise. It happened a little unluckily for him, that this was the very day that Lady Speck's coach had broke down, and the company been obliged to put up at the first village till it was repaired; but for which accident he might have spared himself part of his journey, and met those upon the road whom he went to seek at a greater distance.

Finding, on his arrival at Bath, that Jenny had left the place, he was no less disappointed and vexed than he had expressed himself to be in the letter he sent to her from thence. He took a lodging in the same house the ladies had quit- ted, and put many questions to the mistress of it concerning the motive of their departing so suddenly; but all she could answer was, that she believed it was on Miss Wingham's account, as the old lady's steward had been sent down, after which they had presently prepared for going.

In order to divert his thoughts, he no sooner had put off his travelling-dress than he went to the Long-Room: but as it often happens that seeking pleasure we encounter pain, so it was with Jemmy; here he met with something which, instead of dissipating the gloominess of his mind, served only to render it more heavy.

There was a great deal of company, many of whom Jemmy had a slight acquaintance with, but none with whom he had any intimacy, except one gentleman, who, on the moment of his entering the room, ran to embrace him. 'Dear Jack!' cried Jemmy to him, 'you wonder, I believe, to see me here at this tail of the season?'—'No, faith!' replied the other; 'I should have wondered if I had seen you here before. I have always observed that married people, and people that are going to

'break off, are always careful to avoid each other; they are like buckets in a well, one up and the other down.'—'What do you mean?' demanded Jemmy, a little gravely. 'How dull of understanding you affect to be!' said the other. 'Miss Jessamy left Bath one day, you come to it the next: do you think the world do not see into this? It was not, however, quite so politick, methinks; you should have staid a day longer at least; for sure you must meet, if not clash, upon the road.'—'If I had been so fortunate,' replied Jemmy, 'you would not have found me at Bath; for, I assure you, it was only my impatience to see that lady that brought me hither.'—'Then there is nothing in the story of your breaking with her,' cried the gentleman, 'and going to be married to Miss Chit?'—'Just as much,' returned he, 'as that you are going to be made King of the Romans.'

The other was about to make some answer; but all farther discourse between them on this head was prevented for the present by several gentlemen, who, seeing Jemmy at a distance, came that instant towards him to pay their compliments to him on his arrival.

As Jemmy had never been in the least sensible that any report was raised of his infidelity to Jenny till he was told it by Mr. Morgan, he was the more surprized to hear it at Bath, and from the mouth of a person who had left London before he thought such a thing had ever been talked of there. This making him extremely curious to know who had been his informers, he took an opportunity, when most of the company were engaged at play, to propose to him passing the remainder of the evening together at a tavern; to which the other readily agreed, and they immediately adjourned.

They had no sooner seated themselves, than Jemmy renewed the conversation which had been interrupted in the Long-Room, and desired his friend, in the most earnest terms, to let him know by whom, and in what manner, he had been told so wild and so improbable a story as that of his breaking off with Miss Jessamy, and making his addresses to Miss Chit.

'Faith, my dear Jessamy,' replied the other, 'I am afraid I shall be able
'to

‘to give you but little satisfaction in this point. I think that the first time I ever heard any thing of it was at White’s Chocolate-House, the day before I left London; but there being a good deal of company, I cannot for my soul recollect what gentleman began the discourse, though I know I was a good deal surprized at it, remembering that I heard you express some uneasiness that your affairs in town would not permit you to accompany me to Bath; where, you then said, the best part of yourself,’ meaning Miss Jessamy, ‘was already gone. I must confess,’ continued he, ‘that my journey, and one affair or other of my own, put this intelligence quite out of my head, till, on my coming hither, I found it the discourse of almost all the tea-tables where I had been; some condemning, others excusing, your change; but every one agreeing in the certainty of the fact.’

Here Jemmy could not keep himself from expressing some astonishment, that a thing, so utterly without the least foundation in truth, should be able to obtain such credit; and, more especially, that it should already have reached to such a distance as Bath.

‘For my part,’ resumed the gentleman, ‘I see nothing strange in all this: a story once raised, whether true or false, immediately spreads itself like wild-fire, and runs through the ears and tongues of as many as have any acquaintance with the persons concerned in it. Do you not know what the poet tells us?

“On eagles wings immortal scandals fly.”

‘Besides,’ said he, ‘Bath is the same thing as London: people are so perpetually going backwards and forwards, that what is talked on in one place can never be long a secret in the other. You may also find another reason for the propagation of this rumour: you cannot suppose that either yourself or Miss Jessamy are so little known, or so indifferent to the world, as that it should not be interested in whatever concerns you.’

This compliment was lost upon Jemmy in the humour he was in at present: they were going on, however, with some farther discourse on the same subject,

when something else coming that instant into the gentleman’s mind, he asked him suddenly if he had heard any thing of the hurly-burly that had happened in the house where Miss Jessamy and the other ladies lodged; to which Jemmy answered in the negative, and desired to know of what nature.

The other then repeated to him what he had heard from the mouth of common fame; that a woman, who it was said had been kept by Celandine, and ran mad on his quitting her, had attempted to stab Miss Jessamy; that Mr. Lovegrove had sent him a challenge on that young lady’s account, which he refused to accept; but that some brulée happening between them afterwards, they were both carried before a magistrate, where Mr. Lovegrove, being proved the aggressor, was obliged to give bail; and the other, to avoid being pointed at for a coward, went directly out of town.

‘Well, but the occasion, my dear friend,’ cried Jemmy hastily; ‘how was Celandine answerable for the fury of his forsaken mistress? Or, if he could be so, how came Lovegrove, who all the world knows courts Lady Speck, to be so warm in his resentment on the account of any other woman?’—‘Indeed,’ replied the other, ‘the whole affair seems to me, and to all I have heard speak of it, as much a mystery as it can be to yourself: I can only tell you what happened; but as to the why and the wherefore, it must be left to time, and the parties themselves, to unfold.’

Jemmy’s impatience to know every thing relating to an event in which he thought himself so deeply interested, made him persecute his friend with a thousand questions, which were altogether unavailing, as the other had it not in his power to inform him in any more than he had already done. Hoping, however, to get better intelligence at home, he took leave of his friend more early than otherwise he would have done; yet came to his lodging too late for what he had proposed: the gentlewoman of the house was gone to bed, and he was compelled to defer taking any measures for the satisfaction of his curiosity till the next day.

In the morning, the mistress of the house, on his requesting it, drank chocolate with him in his own apartment;

but,

but, at first, was very cautious in her replies to the interrogatories he put to her; till finding he was already informed of the quarrel between Mr. Lovegrove and Celandine, and also on whose account it happened, she made no scruple of relating to him all she knew of the transaction of the garden, and the danger Miss Jessamy had been in from the jealous rage of Mrs. M——.

Let any one, who is truly a lover, judge how much Jemmy must be shocked on hearing the double danger to which his mistress had been exposed; and, as he doubted not but his presence would have secured her from meeting either with the one or the other of these insults, he severely condemned himself for having suffered any thing to keep him from her. He met with several of his acquaintance here, who would fain have detained him among them during the remainder of the season: but all the persuasions in the world would not now have prevailed upon him to stay a moment longer than he could conveniently depart.

By way of atonement for the vexation, and perhaps the slights Jenny might have sustained through the report of his infidelity, he resolved to shew that he came to Bath only for her sake, and that neither the place nor company had any charms for him now she was gone. Accordingly he set out for London, after giving one day's rest to his servant, who, as he had wrote to Jenny, was very much hurt by a fall he had received in the journey thither.

CHAP. V.

DISPLAYS LOVE IN COLOURS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE IN WHICH THAT PASSION GENERALLY APPEARS, AND SEEMS CALCULATED CHIEFLY FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF THE YOUNG AND FAIR; BUT WILL SCARCELY BE DISPLEASING TO SUCH AS ARE NOT SO; WITH THIS PROVISIO, THAT THEY HAVE NO SHARE OF ENVY IN THEIR COMPOSITION.

NOT the sybils of antiquity, nor those enthusiasts who mounted the hallowed tripod, more mistook for the inspiration of their fictitious deity

the phrenzy of their own heated imaginations, or were more deceived themselves, or capable of deceiving others, than those lovers are who dignify with the sacred name of a pure and virtuous affection that passion which is excited merely by beauty and the difference of sex.

I have heard of some ladies of that romantick turn of mind, as not to be convinced of their lovers sincerity without the most fatal proofs, and have taken in good earnest what the humorous poet only meant in ridicule—

‘He that will hang or beat out’s brains,
‘The devil’s in him if he feigns.’

But though it is to be hoped that far the greater number are of a more reasonable way of thinking, yet I am afraid that, even among some of these, the hero of this history will be looked upon as no more than a half lover at the best. He could be perfectly easy and gay out of Jenny’s company; nay, and what is less to be forgiven, amuse the hours of absence from her in an amorous conversation with other women, when with her he has hitherto discovered none of those impatiences, those alternate hopes and fears, those extravagances, which men so frequently put in practice, and which their mistresses are apt to take as the most certain indications of a true and ardent passion. Yet, in spite of these deficiencies, omissions, commissions, and other commissions against the god of love, I doubt not to bring him, by degrees, into the good graces of the most imperious, vain, and tyrannick, of my fair readers.

It will appear that he loved the object of his honourable flame much more than he knew he did himself: he had never been sensible of the least jealousy on her account; nor, indeed, had taken much pains to prevent that passion from laying hold on her; yet no sooner had he reason to believe she was acquainted with the story of his falshood, than he felt all the pangs which he supposed had seized her heart on receiving a shock so unexpected.

What was wanting in the violence of that passion he had for her, was abundantly made up with tenderness: he trembled not for himself, but her; conscious of his innocence, he had no cause to dread the reproaches she might meet

meet him with ; but was ready to sink under the apprehensions of what she endured till he was fully cleared of this unjust accusation.

It was now that he first began to feel that burning impatience to be with her which all lovers pretend to have : it was not that he so much languished to feast his eyes upon her beauties, or his ears with her wit and engaging conversation, though both had charms for him preferable to those of any other woman in the world ; but it was to ease her of all suspense, in regard to his integrity ; and convince her, by the most unquestionable integrity, that he was incapable of love for any but herself. Let the discreet and judging part of womankind speak their opinion of a lover such as this ; and, I believe, Jemmy himself might safely appeal to the verdict they would give.

The freedom with which, from their infancy, they had been accustomed to converse together, abolished all manner of ceremony between them ; but, had more been required, Jemmy's eagerness to see her would not have permitted him to make use of it at this time : he ordered the postilion to drive directly to the house where she was lodged, and without going home, or having any thoughts of changing his travelling dress, flew up stairs, nor even waited till a servant should apprize her of his arrival. This, however, being the day on which his letter had made her expect his coming, she had taken care to be at home and alone, judging it improper there should be any witnesses of a conversation which she knew not but might be of too much importance to be divulged.

On seeing him enter the room, she rose hastily from her seat, and received the embrace he gave her with the same sweetness and obliging air with which she had always treated him. ' My dear, dear Jenny,' cried he, throwing himself a second time upon her bosom, ' how many disappointments have I suffered before I could attain the blessing I now enjoy ! '— ' I should have shared with you in those disappointments,' answered she, smiling, ' if I had not been assured that whatever pleasures you missed the enjoyment of at Bath, were very well atoned for by others that you met with in London.'— ' Cruel sarcasms ! ' rejoined he,

looking earnestly on her face ; ' could I have expected it from a mouth so much used to softness ? If to have been detained from the presence of all my soul holds dear ; if to have been involved in affairs to which my nature is the most averse ; if to have been aspersed, scandalized, doubly wounded in my love and honour by a villainous report ; if these are pleasures, I have indeed met with enough to gratify the spleen of my worst enemies, but would, methinks, excite my Jenny's pity.'

' One cannot rightly pity,' replied she, more seriously, ' what one is not perfectly acquainted with : you may, perhaps, have had some embarrassments which you did not think proper to communicate to me, and I was loth to depend too much on what I heard from others.'— ' The less you have depended, the more generous you are, and the more fortunate I am. I need not ask what it is you mean ; I know you have been told, that I am inconstant, perfidious ; that, insensible to your merits, and the happiness ordained for me by the best of fathers, I have basely transferred my vows and affections to another.'

' This story,' continued he, perceiving she was silent, ' false and absurd as in itself it is, has not only gained strange credit here, but I find has also been carried down to Bath, and cannot have escaped your ears. I hope you know your Jemmy better than to imagine there was even a possibility of there being the least truth in it ; yet the uneasiness you may have felt through the regard for me, in finding it believed by others, has given me a mortification beyond what I am able to express.'

' Much pains has, indeed, been taken,' replied Jenny, ' to persuade both myself and friends, that you no longer thought me worthy of your affection, and were weary of the engagements made for us by our parents ; but I assure you, that I never gave the least credit to any insinuations of this kind, though made in the most specious manner imaginable.'

She was going on, but Jemmy could not forbear interrupting her, by catching her in his arms, and testifying by that action, as well as by the most rapturous expressions, the grateful sense

he had of the justice she had done him. After having indulged him for some moments—'It was not,' said she, 'that I was thus tenacious of your constancy through any vanity of my own merits, but through a perfect confidence in the sincerity of your heart: I was far from thinking it impossible that you could cease to love me, but then I also thought it impossible that you would not at the same time cease all professions of it; I always believed you incapable of deceit, and therefore could not give credit to your change of sentiments in respect to me, while you continued to assure me they were the same as ever.'—'Charming, angelick creature!' cried he, seizing her a second time, and pressing her with the extremest tenderness to his breast—'How beyond all description villainous, as well as stupid, must be the man, who could wrong such excellent sweetness, such unparalleled goodness!'

Jenny then told him, that whoever had propagated this report, must certainly be greatly interested in having it believed, since such uncommon methods had been taken for that purpose—'As you will presently be convinced by what I have to shew you.' In speaking these words, she ran hastily to a little cabinet, and having taken thence the letter which had been sent to Lady Speck at Bath, and that other which she had received herself since her coming to town from a pretended rival, put them both into his hands, and desired him to peruse them.

Jemmy read them over with an equal mixture of rage and astonishment. He now plainly saw, that to break the union between him and Jenny must have been a thing contrived by some person who was an enemy to both, and could not proceed merely from the vanity of Miss Chit, in imagining him her lover; much less could he think it possible that any woman was capable of raising such a report for the sake of revenge, against a man for not loving her, who had never pretended to do so. He repeated to Jenny, without the least reserve, the motive of his being at first introduced to that young lady's acquaintance, and of the visits he continued to make at her house, till he was informed by Mr. Morgan what the world said of it; protested, as he might

do with the greatest veracity, that he never had the least thought of making an amorous address to her on any score whatever.

They were still upon this topic, and endeavouring, by various conjectures, to fathom the bottom of an affair which seemed so mysterious to both of them, when a servant came into the room to lay the cloth, Jenny having ordered supper should be served up that night in her own chamber. This changed the subject of their entertainment for the present; but the business of the table was no sooner over, than more and greater matters came upon the carpet.

CHAP. VI.

WILL BE FOUND YET MORE AFFECTING THAN THE FORMER, UNLESS THE READER IS AS DULL AS, PERHAPS, HE MAY THINK THE AUTHOR.

WHEN our lovers had regained the opportunity of communicating freely to each other all that their minds were charged with, Jemmy, who had thought a good deal of what had been told him concerning the insults Jenny had received from Celandine and his outrageous mistress, began to testify a desire of being fully informed of the particulars of an adventure he had heard but an imperfect account of at Bath.

Jenny hesitated not to comply with his request; but though she expatiated, with all the wit and satire she was mistress of, on Celandine's behaviour in regard to the challenge sent him by Mr. Lovegrove, yet she took care to avoid setting his impertinence towards herself in so bad a light as she might have done, and it indeed deserved. Never had this young lady given a greater demonstration of her prudence, than in thus shadowing over, as much as truth would permit, the insolence of Celandine: she considered, that it was not unlikely that Jemmy might some time or other meet him, and think himself obliged to call him to a severe account, for an affront offered to the woman whom it was so publicly known he was about to marry.

She soon found how necessary had been the precaution she had taken;
Jemmy

Jemmy flew into the extremest rage at the presumption of Celandine, even on hearing it in the manner she recited it; and she was obliged, before she could bring him to any degree of moderation, to remind him, that all the actions of so egregious a coxcomb proceeded more from folly than design, and merited rather contempt than indignation from a man of sense.

‘ You see, my dear Jenny,’ said he, ‘ how many inconveniences have attended the protraction of our marriage so much beyond the time in which it was expected to have been consummated: for Heaven’s sake, therefore, let us put an end to the suspense that every one is in, and convince the world that we indeed are born only for each other.’

‘ Could you resolve,’ cried she, with an air which had something very meaning in it, ‘ to renounce all the joys of an unhoused condition, as Otway calls a single life, and give up your liberty before fully satisfied with the sweets you men find in it? How would it sound at Mrs. Comode’s, that Mr. Jessamy was become a husband?’— ‘ Mrs. Comode!’ repeated he. She made no answer presently, but went again to her cabinet to fetch the letter he had intended for Lady Hardy, and put it open into his hands. ‘ How would marriage, my dear Jessamy,’ resumed she, ‘ agree with the promise you made in this, of coming to the arms of the kind she to whom you wrote it, with a heart entirely unincumbered with any cares but those of pleasing her?’

The consternation he was in at this sight is utterly impossible to be described; but recovering himself from it as well as he could—‘ Before I make any attempt,’ said he, ‘ either to excuse or justify my conduct in this point, tell me, I conjure you, by what means this letter came into your possession.’

‘ You need but turn the paper,’ answered she, ‘ and the superscription will inform you.’ He did so, and finding it—‘ To Miss Jessamy at Bath,’ instantly discovered the mistake he had committed, and cried out in the greatest confusion—‘ Good God! how justly is my folly punished!’ then turning to Jenny—‘ yet when known,’ continued he, ‘ by how odd an accident I was

betrayed into this error, you will, I am sure, forgive me.’

‘ I will know nothing farther of this matter,’ replied Jenny, ‘ nor shall I ever think of it hereafter; all I desire is, that, when we marry, you will either have no amours, or be more cautious in concealing them: and, in return, I promise never to examine into your conduct; to send no spies to watch your motions; to listen to no tales that may be brought me; nor by any methods whatever endeavour to discover more than you would have me.’

‘ Generous creature!’ rejoined he, kissing her hand; ‘ yet permit me to assure you, by all my hopes of happiness, that the fault I am now detected in was never eagerly pursued by me; that it was only an intention; did not proceed to swerve, even in thought, from the fidelity I owe my dear forgiving Jenny.’

‘ Make no vows on this last head, I beseech you,’ said she; ‘ I have heard people much older, and more experienced than ourselves, say, that the surest way to do a thing is to resolve against it. Besides, my dear Jemmy,’ added she, with the most engaging sprightliness, ‘ I shall not be so unreasonable to expect more constancy from you, than human nature and your constitution will allow; and if you are as good as you can, may very well content myself with your endeavours to be better.’

What so much gains upon the soul as to meet endearments where we expected only reproaches? according to the words of a late honourable author:

‘ Kindness has resistless charms,
‘ All things else but faintly warms;
‘ It gilds the lover’s servile chain,
‘ And makes the slave grow pleas’d and vain.’

To find Jenny thus turning into pleasantry what would have made other women swell into a storm of rage and jealousy, transported Jemmy almost beyond himself; he thought she was somewhat superior to mortality, and half divine, and ascribed to her what Mr. Addison makes Juba say of Cato’s daughter:

‘ The virtuous Marcia towers above her sex;
‘ True, she is fair, O how divinely fair!

‘But then the lovely maid improves her
 ‘charms,
 ‘With wisdom, modesty, good-nature,
 ‘And sanctity of manners.’—

In the exuberance of his present admiration, he gave her such praises, as not being able to endure the hearing, she put her hand before his mouth to silence—‘Hold, Jemmy,’ said she; ‘you cannot entertain me with any thing less agreeable than encomiums, which, thank Heaven, I am not so silly as to imagine I deserve. If you would oblige me, let us change the conversation.’—‘Oh, Jenny! Jenny!’ cried he, sending forth a tender sigh between every repetition of her name, ‘How is it possible for me to think or speak of any thing but your transcendent goodness, and my own unworthiness!’

In pronouncing these last words he fixed his eyes upon the letter which had given him so much confusion, and he had thrown upon the table after having seen what it was. Jenny perceiving on what his looks were bent, snatched it hastily away, and running to a candle, set it immediately on fire. ‘This testimony of your fault,’ said she, ‘shall no more rise up against you; and, as it consumes, may all remembrance of it forever be extinguished!’

The heart of Jemmy was so much overwhelmed with love and gratitude at this action, and the words that accompanied it, that he could not refrain the most extravagant demonstrations of what he felt; he threw himself at her feet, and embraced her knees with transports not to be described, nor even by himself expressed.

It was with a great deal of difficulty that she made him rise from the posture he was in, and much more that she prevailed on him to talk no more on this affair; to which, on whatever topick she began, he would still return.

The time passed so swiftly, as well as sweetly, in this tender intercourse, that the lovers never so much as thought on hours, nor once looked upon their watches, till the sonorous guardian of the night, with his usual solemnity, thundered in their ears—‘Past two o’clock.’

It was now that Jemmy first reflected how much he had transgressed on his dear mistress’s repose, and therefore pre-

pared to take an unwilling leave; but she would not suffer him to go, till her servant, none of his own being there, had got a chair for him; which being brought, they embraced, kissed, and parted; the behaviour of each to the other having imprinted a mutual satisfaction in their minds, greater than ever either of them had before experienced.

CHAP. VII.

IS VERY CONCISE, AND PRESENTS THE READER ONLY WITH SOME FEW PASSAGES, BY WAY OF A PREPARATIVE FOR EVENTS SHORTLY TO ENSUE, OF AN INFINITELY FAR GREATER CONSEQUENCE.

THE good-natured reader must certainly be pleased to find, that all the base artifices of Bellpine were so entirely frustrated; that all his endeavours to dissolve the union between the lovers had only served to cement it the more firmly; that they were now in a fair way of being as happy as could be wished; and that the ungenerous contriver of the plots against them had the mortification to see all his labour had been thrown away.

He could not, indeed, any longer flatter himself with the least hopes of success; the last conversation he had with Jemmy before he went to Bath, and that he now had with Jenny on her arrival from that place, convinced him that neither the one nor the other were to be wrought upon by any projects he could frame. Besides the disappointment of those vain hopes he had entertained of becoming one day the master of Jenny’s person and fortune, it vexed him to the heart to have lost himself in the good graces of Miss Chit; not that he had any regard for her on her own account, but because, as has been already observed, he was soliciting for an employment at court, where he knew that young lady had a very great interest. He had never been to visit her since the concert, when, as the reader may remember, she had given him a rebuff which might well make him fearful of approaching her again, without some more plausible pretence than it was in his power to make, to cover the occasion









Stecher del.

Barrell, sculp.

sion he had given her of offence. It also fell out, very unluckily for him, that just at this time the post he was endeavouring to procure happened in the disposal of a certain great person, who, it was said, was too nearly allied to Miss Chit to have refused her any thing she asked; well, therefore, might he be chagrined at having, by a foolish scheme, incurred the displeasure of one so able, and whom he had reason to believe would otherwise have been so ready to serve him.

Miss Chit had, indeed, a great deal of good nature, and an inclination to afford all the assistance in her power to any one who she thought either wanted or deserved it; she had been acquainted with Bellpine for a considerable time, had looked upon him as a very facetious tea-table visitor, and he had not deceived himself in believing she would have exerted her whole interest in his favour.

But all the good-will she once had for him was now justly converted into an adequate resentment; she was gay and flighty, but wanted not understanding; she plainly saw he had imposed upon her on Mr. Jessamy's account, by the answer that gentleman had sent to her card of invitation; and as she was not able to conceive with what design he had made her the dupe, it gave her the more disquiet, and dwelt the longer on her mind. She likewise found he had told the same story he had done to herself to several of her friends, who were continually teasing her with one question or another concerning this imaginary lover; nor could all her protestations that she knew nothing of the matter, pass with any of them for more than maiden bashfulness.

All this while, however, she knew not how much she suffered in the opinion of some people, till a pretty extraordinary chance discovered it to her. On account of some apprehensions of an inward decay, she had been advised to drink milk warm from the cow, with conserve of roses; and, in compliance with this recipe, went every morning into the Park, and sat upon a bench while her maid prepared the dose she was to take.

It happened that at one of these times two elderly gentlemen came and placed

themselves on the same seat; they took no other notice of her than the compliment of—‘By your leave, Madam;’ nor did she much regard the near neighbourhood of them, as their age and gravity defended her from the fears of being treated by them with any of those impertinences she might have had reason enough to expect from the more young and gay. They talked only of the weather, the calamity of the times, and such like common topics of conversation, till he who appeared to be somewhat the oldest of the two, started up on a sudden, and went hastily towards a footman who he saw passing along on the other side of the Mall.

On his return—‘If I am not mistaken,’ said his friend, ‘the person you have been speaking to belongs to Mr. Jessamy.’—‘Yes,’ replied he; ‘I did not know his master was in town; but it seems he came last night.’—‘Are you acquainted with him,’ pray?—‘No otherwise,’ said he, ‘than by seeing him at a coffee-house where I sometimes go; but I am told he is a very accomplished gentleman.’—‘As any in town,’ rejoined the old gentleman, pretty eagerly; ‘and, I can tell you, has as few of the vices of it.’

Before we proceed any farther, it is highly proper to inform the reader, that the person who spoke with so much friendly warmth, was no other than that very Mr. Morgan mentioned in the nineteenth chapter of the second volume, for the remarkable conference he had with Jemmy, on account of his supposed infidelity to Jenny. This hearty well-wisher of Jemmy was about to add something farther in his praise, but was hindered from doing so at that time by the other's saying, that he had heard some talk of the match between him and Miss Jessamy being broke off, and that he made his addresses at present to a young lady called Miss Chit. ‘Nothing in it, upon my word, Sir,’ replied Mr. Morgan, a little peevishly; ‘all an idle story, raised by the vain girl herself. I heard it too, and I believe was the first that told him of it; but I never saw a man so much surprized and vexed. She wanted to draw him in, I suppose; she has a good voice, it seems, and plays on the harpsichord; he made her

‘her some few visits on that score, and
 ‘she was so silly as either to believe
 ‘him really in love with her, or to en-
 ‘deavour to make others believe so, if
 ‘she could; that is all, upon my ho-
 ‘nour, Sir.’

It is easy to conceive what Miss Chit must feel on being witness of this discourse. On hearing Mr. Jessamy named, she had sat longer than else she would have done, out of mere curiosity of knowing what would be said of him, but little expected to hear such a character of herself: she as yet, however, restrained the passion she was in, and Mr. Morgan went on—‘Thank Heaven, I have no daughters,’ resumed he; ‘formerly a young maid was ready to blush to death at being told a man was in love with her; but now, forsooth, the girls are as proud of a new lover as they are of a new suit of cloaths, and want as much to shew it: but, a lack-a-day! Miss Chit quite missed her mark in my friend Jessamy; he loves musick, it is true; but is not to be sung or played out of his senses.’

She could now hold out no longer. ‘Do you know this Miss Chit, Sir,’ demanded she, ‘whom you speak of in this contemptuous manner?’—‘No, truly, Madam,’ answered he; ‘but if I did, I should make no scruple to tell her my mind on this occasion.’—‘If you had the least acquaintance with her,’ returned she, ‘you would find she stood in no need of any lessons you could give. I can assure you she despises the thoughts of drawing in any man; she is above it: and as for boasting of her lovers, has too many who are really such, for her to be vain on any imaginary single one.’ With these words she quitted the bench; and, casting a disdainful look on Mr. Morgan, took hold of her maid’s arm, and tripped down the walk with the utmost precipitation.

What the gentleman said of her after she was gone, or whether Mr. Morgan had any guess that she was the person he had been speaking of, is not material; I shall only say, that the affronted lady went home in the greatest agitations; that she wept, raved, cursed Bellpene as the primary cause of all this, and at last took a resolution to do what will presently be shewn.

CHAP. VIII.

CONTAINS A MOST EXTRAORDINARY, AS WELL AS UNEXPECTED, TURN IN THE LOVERS AFFAIRS, NOT FIT TO BE READ BY THOSE WHO HAVE TENDER HEARTS OR WATERY EYES.

THE joy one feels on being forgiven an offence which one repents, and is heartily ashamed of, can be surpassed by nothing but that most sublime satisfaction which must fill the mind of the person who forgives. Both our lovers were equally pleased with themselves and with each other, and there wanted but one thing to complete the felicity of either.

As for Jenny, it cannot be supposed that she wished a supream happiness than what she now enjoyed, in a full assurance of the affection and sincerity of her dear Jemmy; but we will not pretend to say, that his desires were altogether so much circumscribed. He thought it was now high time to fulfil the agreement made between their parents, and the more so, as it would be the only sure way of totally silencing the present invidious report, and of preventing all others of the like nature from being propagated hereafter. This last, he thought, would be a prevailing motive with her, and therefore resolved to omit neither that nor any other argument, which all the love and wit he was master of could furnish him with, to gain her consent to a speedy celebration of their nuptials.

The pleasing contemplations on Jenny’s behaviour towards him the evening before, her thousand amiable qualities, and the idea of that happiness he hoped shortly to be in full possession of, kept him in bed somewhat longer than was his custom: but he was no sooner up and dressed, than he hastened to the apartment of that dear mistress, who had been the sole object both of his dreams and waking thoughts.

He found Miss Wingman with her, but was not sorry he did so; for as he knew that lady was acquainted with the story of his imaginary falsehood, by the letter which had been sent to Lady Speck,

Speck, he made no scruple of saying to Jenny great part of what he would have done had she not been present; nor was Jenny at all displeased that this young lady should be witness how little foundation there was for the reports which had been spread. 'Indeed, my dear,' said Miss Wingman, on hearing him press the completion of their marriage, 'I think you ought not to refuse compliance with Mr. Jessamy's desires, if it were only to make him some amends for the vexation he must have endured in the late scandal thrown upon him.'—'First, be generous yourself, before you direct others to be so,' replied Jenny, laughing. 'Mr. Jessamy cannot have suffered more, or with less reason, than Lord Huntley has done; and when I see you inclined to make a reparation, I may perhaps be prevailed upon to follow your example.'

'I do not know how soon I may be obliged to it,' resumed that lady; 'for Sir Thomas Welby and my mamma are so ashamed and concerned at the injury they have done my lord by their unjust suspicions, that, by way of atonement, they are for making a present of me to him, almost whether I will or not.'—'Excellent, if faith!' cried Jemmy; 'you are caught, my dear Jenny, and have made a promise without knowing you did so: I shall, however, be obliged to watch and pray for Lord Huntley's happiness, as I find my own so much depends upon it.'

They went on in the same strain of pleasantry all the time Miss Wingman staid; but after she was gone, Jemmy began to renew his suit with more seriousness, and had the pleasure to find it not altogether rejected, though not immediately complied with.

'It is not owing to the want of affection for you,' said she, with the most enchanting softness, 'but rather to an excess of it, that I would yet a little longer protract what you at present seem so earnestly to desire: men are often deceived in their own hearts; I speak not to reproach you for any amours you have been engaged in, or that I am jealous of any you may hereafter be engaged in; no, my dear Jemmy, I should not think that even marriage gave me a right to censure or pry into your actions: it is for your own sake

alone that I would have you forbear making a vow of constancy, till you are very certain of being quite out of love with variety; but rather continue in a condition which allows you full liberty to pursue whatever pleasures you think fit, without having any occasion to condemn yourself.'—'I should be ready to condemn myself to everlasting horrors,' cried he, 'could I be capable of lavishing one tender thought on any but the who so well deserves all, and much more than I can pay. I confess I have been guilty of some follies; but in all my amusements with your sex, my heart had never the least share: no, that was always, is, and ever must be entirely, unchangeably, inviolably, devoted to my only dear, dear Jenny!'

They were in the midst of this tender conversation, when the persons with whom Jenny boarded, hearing Jemmy was above, sent to entreat he would honour them with his company at dinner that day; which invitation, for the sake of not being separated from Jenny, he willingly accepted.

These people were well-bred, and perfectly cheerful; but the lovers liking no company so well as that of each other, staid no longer with them than decency demanded, and Jemmy had again an opportunity of repeating his solicitations, which he did in the most pressing and emphatick manner. How far he would have been able to prevail is uncertain; Jenny's servant came into the room, and told her that a young lady, who called herself Miss Chit, was in a chair at the door, and desired leave to wait on her. On hearing the name of Miss Chit, Jemmy and Jenny looked upon each other with the utmost astonishment. 'Are you acquainted with her?' cried he. 'Not in the least,' answered she; 'nor can imagine what should bring her here.'—'But go,' said she to the man, 'and shew her up.' They had no time to form any conjectures, the lady immediately came in, and Jenny rose to receive her with her accustomed politeness, but mixed with a certain reserve, which she neither could nor endeavoured to throw off.

'You are, doubtless, surprized, Madam,' said Miss Chit, 'at receiving a visit from one so much a stranger to you;

‘you; but you will pardon the liberty I have taken, when you know the necessity that obliged me to it.’—‘I cannot suppose, Madam,’ replied Jenny, ‘that you would have given yourself this trouble without being induced by some extraordinary motive.’—‘An extraordinary one indeed, Madam,’ resumed the other—‘And I am very glad to meet you here,’ addressing herself to Jemmy, ‘as what I have to say to this lady concerns you also.’—‘You are certainly in the right, Madam,’ added he very gravely; ‘for whatever relates to this lady must infallibly concern me too.’—‘I never believed the contrary,’ said Miss Chit; ‘nor doubted of the sincerity of your attachment to one so deserving of it; and it was in some measure to do justice to you that I brought me hither, as well as to vindicate myself from the most cruel aspersion that ever was laid on any one of my sex.’

No reply being made to these words, she went on—‘It is scarce possible,’ said she, ‘that either of you can have escaped the hearing a report, which, absurd as it is, has been strangely propagated about town, concerning the intended marriage between you being broke off. But you, perhaps, may be ignorant that your pretended friend, Bellpine, was the sole author of this invention.’

‘Bellpine!’ cried they both out at the same time; ‘sure, Madam, you mistake!’—‘Yes, Bellpine,’ rejoined she, ‘for what base ends I know not, would fain have made me so weak as to believe Mr. Jessamy was not only false to his first vows, but also false on my account. I pretend not to be free from the follies my sex are charged with, yet was never vain enough to believe a man in love with me till he had told me so himself; and therefore gave no credit to all he said and swore upon that subject: his artifices, however, wrought so far upon my father, and all those of my friends with whom he had any acquaintance, that, wherever I went, I was entertained with no other discourse than my imaginary conquest. I was very much amazed at all this; but other thoughts kept it from dwelling much upon my mind, till this morning I was grossly affront-

ed, by being told that I myself had spread about this foolish story, as having flattered myself that the few visits Mr. Jessamy had favoured me with were made on the account of his having a passion for me.’

‘It is no matter, Madam,’ cried Jemmy, ‘by whom or in what manner this ridiculous story has been propagated: but tell me, was it from Bellpine that you were first informed of this pretended villainy?’—‘Yes, Sir,’ answered she; ‘it was from him, and him alone, that your character has been traduced, Miss Jessamy without doubt disquieted, and myself attempted to be deceived, as you will presently be convinced, if you have patience to listen to the monstrous detail I can give you of his behaviour.’

She then went on, and gave a succinct account of all the particulars she knew of Bellpine’s conduct in this affair; which, as the reader is already perfectly acquainted with, need not be here repeated.

Jenny opened not her lips, but listened with the greatest attention to all she said; but Jemmy could not keep himself from interrupting her at almost every sentence by some vehement exclamation; and when he spoke not, discovered by his gestures all the marks of an overboiling rage. ‘Well, Madam,’ cried he, perceiving she had done, ‘I see that Bellpine has been the Boutefeu: for what reason he has been so, belongs to me to penetrate.’ He said no more, but snatched up his hat, which lay on a table near him, and flew down the stairs without taking any other leave.

Jenny having observed the agitations he had been in, was greatly frightened at this last action: she ran and opened the door, which he had flung after him as he went, and called as loud as she could to him to come back; but he either heard not, or would not at that time obey her summons. She then stamped with both her feet, and rung the bell for her footman with such violence, as snapped the wire by which it hung. ‘Run,’ cried she, ‘overtake Mr. Jessamy, who is just gone out of the house; tell him, I must needs speak with him, and desire he will return this instant.’

It is not to be doubted but that the fellow did his best, but notwithstanding all the speed he made, the person he pursued was gone quite out of sight. This increasing the ferment on Jenny's spirits—'I wish, Madam,' said the to Miss Chit, 'you had reserved the story you have been telling, till you had found me alone; it is dangerous to let one gentleman know too much of the injuries he has sustained from another.'—'I should be sorry, Madam,' replied that young lady, 'that what I meant well should prove the contrary: but I flatter myself the event will give me no cause for repentance; Mr. Jessamy, I hope, will only examine Bellpine on this affair; he is not worthy of his sword; nor, as base men are generally cowards, will scarcely be provoked to meet it.'

Jenny making no answer, and continuing to walk about the room in a disordered motion, the other easily perceived her company was not desired, so took her leave without much ceremony on either side.

Impossible is it to describe the apprehensions, the alarms, which shook the tender heart of Jenny for what might be the consequences of the discovery Miss Chit had made. She figured to herself all that was terrible on the occasion, and could scarce bear up under the ideas of her own formation. But if she suffered so much through the fears of what might, or might not happen, what must the cruel certainty inflict, when in about three hours after she saw Jemmy enter the room with a countenance pale and confused, and his cloaths sprinkled in many places with blood! 'Oh, heavens!' cried she, 'what have you been doing?'—'An act of justice,' replied he, 'which I can repent of for no other reason than as it compels me to be once more separated from you. I know not but I have killed the villain Bellpine, and prudence requires that I should be out of the way for a short time.'—'But whither will you go?' demanded she, in a voice scarcely articulate. 'Where can you be safe?'—'I have already taken care of that,' answered he; 'all is prepared for my departure, and I but stay to snatch one dear embrace.'—'Go, then; oh, go!' cried

she, 'and hazard not your safety by a moment's delay.' Though she spoke this with all the courage she could assume, yet she could not so well conceal the tremblings of her whole frame, while he held her in his arms, but that he found, and was pierced with them to the soul: 'I cannot go,' said he, 'and leave you thus.'—'You must, you must,' rejoined she; 'your presence, while this danger threatens, is much more terrible to me than your absence can be.'

He then told her, that a boat waited to carry him that night to Greenwich; that he should take post-chaise from thence to Dover, and hoped to be in Calais before that time the next day. On hearing this, she in a manner forced him from her arms, and never was there a more tender, though hasty parting, than between those two so equally loving and beloved.

CHAP. IX.

IS INSERTED FOR NO OTHER PURPOSE THAN MERELY TO GRATIFY THE CURIOSITY OF THE READER.

THE event which once more separated our lovers is of so interesting a nature, that I believe there are but very few who will not be desirous of knowing those particulars concerning it, which Jemmy had no opportunity of relating to his fair mistress, in the short time his safety allowed him to stay with her.

But, first, as some people may be apt to think that Miss Chit, in making the discovery she had done, had a view to the consequences which ensued; and that, in mere spite to Jemmy for not loving her, and Bellpine for having imposed upon her, she had taken this method of revenging herself on both; in justice to her character, I must therefore beg leave to observe, that, if this had been the case, she would rather have chose to have wrote the whole matter to Jemmy, with whom she was acquainted, than have gone in person to a lady to whom she had never spoke in her whole life, and from whom she could not be certain of meeting a very candid reception.

On hearing herself accused in the manner she had been by Mr. Morgan, and not doubting but that Jenny, as the party most concerned, had been equally severe upon her on that occasion, she came, in the heat of her passion, to clear herself to that lady from the imputation of a vanity of which she was, indeed, not guilty; and to convince her, by relating the whole proceeding of Bellpine in this affair, that she neither was, nor ever imagined herself, her rival in Jemmy's affection. It is true, that, on seeing him there, she might have forebore making any mention of Bellpine, or the business on which she came; but, then, what other excuse could she have made to Jenny for this visit? At least, she was not at that time prepared with any; so that, it must be allowed, the mischief she did sprung more from inadvertency than design.

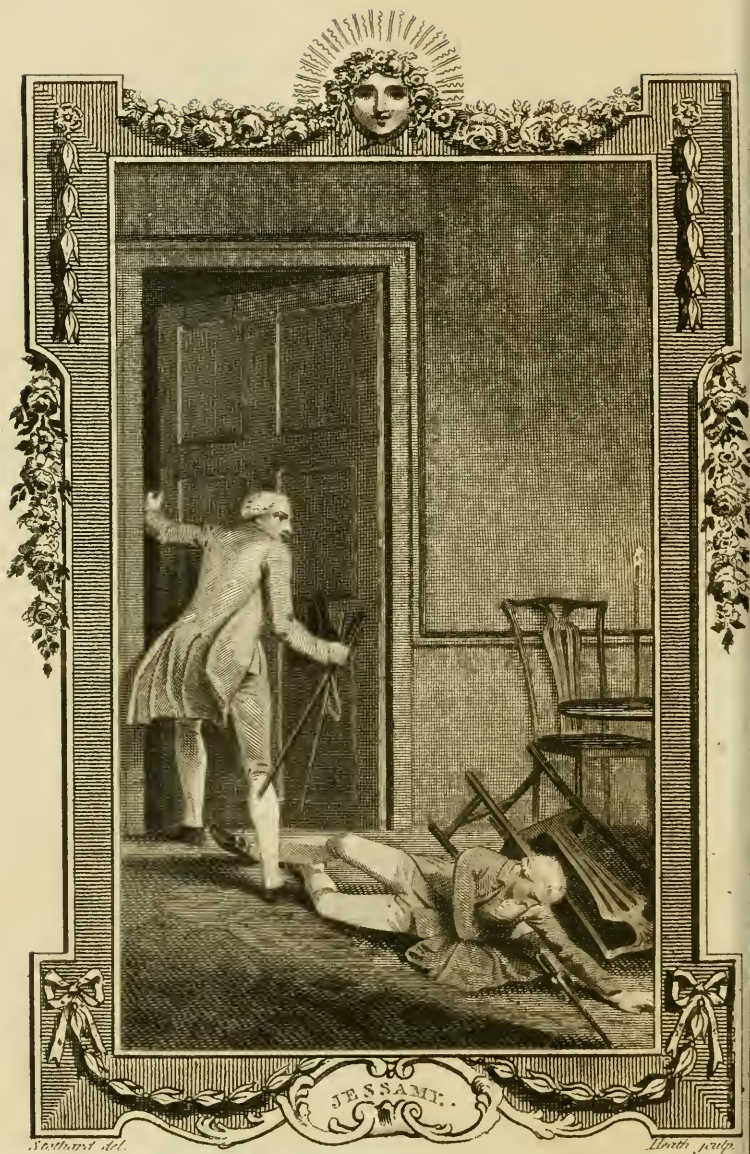
As for Jemmy, nobody, I believe, will either wonder at, or condemn, his just indignation, on finding himself thus treacherously dealt with by a person he had loved and so much confided in: the laws both of honour and nature obliged him to demand some satisfaction for the injury that had been done him; and he must have been little of a lover, and, indeed, little of a man, not to have repented it in the manner he did. Fired with a rage impossible to be expressed, he had not patience to wait the dull formality of a challenge; but, the moment he left Jenny's apartment, flew in search of that infamous traducer of his reputation.

As he knew most of the houses frequented by Bellpine, he went from one to another enquiring for him, but without success; and was just going home in order to send him a summons to meet him the next morning, when, in his way thither, he saw, by the light of the lamps, (for it was then dark) the person he had vainly sought for, coming out of a tavern with another gentleman, arm in arm. 'Bellpine!' cried he. 'Jeffamy!' rejoined the other. 'What, left Bath so soon?' — 'Yes,' resumed Jemmy; 'and must needs speak with you this instant.' — 'I was going to supper with this gentleman,' said Bellpine; 'but will put off my engagement, if your business be of any importance.' — 'It is,' replied Jemmy; 'and cannot be delayed.'

Bellpine perceiving, by his manner of speaking, that he had somewhat more than ordinary in his mind, and perhaps imagining it might be some new incident relating to Lady Hardy, excused himself to his friend for quitting him; and they went into the tavern, and up into the same room where Bellpine and the other gentleman had been drinking. The bottles and glasses were not yet removed; but, as soon as they were so, and fresh wine brought in—'Now, my dear friend, your pleasure?' said Bellpine. 'To tell you that you are a villain!' replied Jemmy; 'a most consummate villain!' — 'A villain, Sir!' retorted Bellpine. 'Yes, I again repeat the name,' cried Jemmy; 'a villain, a base incendiary! or you would not, by the most monstrous of all falsehoods, have defamed the character of one you called your friend, and endeavoured to break the bands of union between two hearts inseparably linked by love and honour!'

Conscious guilt now stared this base man in the face, and assisted the reproaches of his injured friend: he affected, however, an entire ignorance of what he was accused of, and would have seemed to take as only a jest what the other said to him. But our hero was in too great a heat to endure this trifling: he told him, that he had learned the truth of every thing from Miss Chit; that she was now with Jenny; and insisted that he should either go with him to those two ladies, renounce all he had said, and ask pardon on his knees, or with his sword defend the injustice he had done.

To this he sullenly replied, that he knew of no obligation he was under to do either the one or the other. 'Then you are a coward, a scoundrel, and a poltroon!' cried Jemmy; 'and deserve to be used as such!' With these words, he took one of the glasses, which the drawer had filled before he left the room, and threw full in his face. The other could not now be any longer passive; they made several thrusts, and Bellpine had the advantage of having the first hit, by wounding his antagonist in the arm: but this slight hurt was soon retured with double interest; Jemmy making a furious push, ran him quite through the body. He fell immediately, crying out—'Oh! I am killed!'



Southard del.

North sculp.

'killed!' Jemmy ran to him; but he spoke no more, nor shewed the least signs of life; on which he thought it behoved him to make the best of his way out of the house; which he did directly, though not without ordering a drawer, as he passed by the bar, to go up to the gentleman above.

After he had got out of that street, he stood still awhile, to consider what course he should take, in case Bellpine was really dead; and, on reflecting how much circumstances were against him, found it most advisable to leave England till he should hear whether the wound he had given him was mortal or not. Having resolved on this, he called upon a surgeon of his acquaintance, and directed him to go immediately to the tavern where he had left Bellpine, contenting himself with having his own arm, which had only a flesh-wound, dressed and bound up by the apprentice.

He then went home, and made his servants get every thing ready for his departure. They loved their master too well not to be very expeditious in executing his commands; and, indeed, as it was not likely but that what had happened would presently be known, there was no time to be lost: the danger he was in, however, would not prevent him from bidding adieu to his dear Jemmy, as has been already said.

As for Bellpine, he was not dead, nor speechless, as he had feigned to be; but, finding himself deeply pierced, had fallen out of policy, to prevent his enemy from giving a second blow: so apt are men of mean minds to judge of others by themselves.

A surgeon had been sent for by the people of the tavern before Jemmy's friend arrived: both these gentlemen coming almost at the same time, examined the wound together; but neither of them could pretend, as yet, to give his opinion how far it might be dangerous. The condition he was in not permitting him to be put either into a coach or chair, they were obliged to lay him on a mattraß, and, covered close over with blankets, make him to be carried by two fellows on a bier to his lodgings. Both the surgeons immediately followed, saw him into bed, and gave exact directions in what manner he should be ordered till they should attend him again the next morning;

which they did very early, as believing his case extremely dangerous.

To their care, and the secret remorse of his own conscience for having so justly incurred the misfortune now fallen upon him, we shall leave him for a time, and return to subjects more capable of affecting the heart of every generous reader.

CHAP. X.

TREATS OF DIVERS THINGS, SOME OF LITTLE, SOME OF GREATER, CONSEQUENCE; BUT NONE THAT WILL AFFORD MUCH MATTER OF ENTERTAINMENT TO THOSE THAT READ FOR NO OTHER END THAN MERELY TO DIVERT THEMSELVES.

EVERY passion of the human mind gains double energy by our endeavours to conceal it: like fire, which, being smothered for a time, bursts out at last with greater violence. Jenny, who had behaved with so much seeming resolution while Jemmy was with her, could not see him turn his back to leave her, she knew not for how long, and on so dreadful an occasion, without falling into the extremest agonies: all her moderation, almost all her reason, forsook her at this dreadful juncture. 'He is gone!' cried she. 'He is gone! perhaps for ever! and I am left to waste my youth in unavailing grief! But what of that, selfish that I am, in comparison of him? How small a share of pity is my due! His single loss is all I have to mourn; while he, dear unhappy wanderer! is driven at once from his native country, from love, from friendship, from tune, without any other companion than the dire reflection of having embued his hands in the blood of a fellow-creature! Bellpine was wicked,' continued she; 'but justice might have overtaken him without the guilt of him he had wronged. Oh, what is honour! this impatience of indignities, as the poet calls it—

"This raging fit of virtue in the soul;
"This painful burden, which great minds
"must bear;
"Obtain'd with danger, and possess'd with
"fear."

This was the manner in which the generous and truly amiable Jenny lamented the accident that had happened: she wept not for the absence of her lover, but for the occasion that enforced it. Such was the delicacy of her soul, that his real infidelity would not have inflicted on her the thousandth part of those agonies she now endured on his having so fatally resented the aspersions; and so dear was he to her, that she would have wished to see him unfaithful rather than unhappy.

It might, perhaps, be too affecting, though all that could be said would be far short of the truth of what she suffered during this whole cruel night: the morning, however, brought her some consolation; she heard that Bellpine was not dead; and, to find that he had not been killed on the spot, as Jemmy had imagined, affording her some hopes that his wounds might not be mortal, gave her as much satisfaction as a person in her circumstances was capable of feeling.

The whole adventure being presently blazed abroad, all her friends, and more of her acquaintance than, at that time, she wished to see, came to visit her, and make their compliments of condolence. Among the number of the former were Lady Speck, Miss Wingman, Mr. Lovegrove, and Sir Robert Manley. After their having expressed their concern for the accident, as it might give Mr. Jessamy much trouble, especially if his antagonist should die, they told her that Lord Huntley was to give them a concert that evening upon the River, and would have persuaded her to have accompanied them, in order, as they said, and really meant, to divert those melancholy thoughts which could not but rise in her mind on what had happened.

It is not to be imagined that she gave the least ear to so unreasonable an invitation; but they continuing to press her with a great deal of earnestness to accept it—‘Oh!’ said she, bursting into tears, which hitherto she had restrained in their presence, ‘can you think me capable of making one in a party of pleasure, while the liberty, perhaps the life, of him ordained to be my husband, is in danger? No! till I know him safe, musick would be discord to my ears, and every thing that

gives joy to others, add to my affliction!’ On hearing this, Sir Robert Manley could not forbear breaking into a kind of rhapsody—‘Happy Mr. Jessamy!’ cried he; ‘by his very misfortunes rendered yet more blessed in the proofs of such exalted tenderness!’

Mr. Lovegrove said little less in praise of her constancy and generosity; and the ladies afterwards gave over urging her any farther on the subject they had done, but employed the whole time they staid with her in discourses more suitable to her present humour. But what was most of all obliging to her, was a promise the two gentlemen made of taking care to inform themselves, from day to day, of the true condition of Bellpine’s wounds, and letting her have an exact account, to the end she might transmit it to Mr. Jessamy, and enable him the better to judge what course he had to take.

Several others of her acquaintance, who, hearing what had happened, came to visit her on that occasion, and those among them who were most apprehensive on Jemmy’s account, forbore to speak their sentiments in her presence; but, on the contrary, all joined to comfort her with hopes which they were far from entertaining themselves; so that she passed this night with somewhat more tranquillity than she had done the preceding one.

Between her broken slumbers, however, a thousand melancholy reflections returned upon her mind; her thoughts pursued the dear unhappy fugitive in his wanderings; they painted him to her troubled imagination in the most forlorn and piteous moving figure; thus travelling by night, and exposed to dangers almost equal to those from which he fled: nor when her eyes, doubly fatigued with tears and watching, were closed again in sleep, did the sad ideas entirely quit her head.

The next day brought with it somewhat which threw her into fresh agitations. She was no sooner up than her maid presented her with a letter, which had been left for her by a footman some time before she had quitted her bed, she having lain that morning longer than was her usual custom.

She was a little surprized at not knowing the hand on the superscription; but

but on her opening it, found it from Miss Chit; and contained the following lines.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY.

‘ MADAM,

‘ I Am extremely sorry to send you
‘ any intelligence that may add to
‘ the disquiet I am sensible you are al-
‘ ready under; but there are some in
‘ which it is absolutely necessary that
‘ even the most painful truths should
‘ be revealed: you will find this re-
‘ lating to Mr. Jessamy is so; and
‘ therefore do not condemn, as an over
‘ officiousness in me, what I now take
‘ the liberty to communicate.

‘ One of the surgeons who attends
‘ Bellpine has declared, that, accord-
‘ ing to the best of his judgment, his
‘ patient cannot live; on which a search-
‘ warrant is issued out against Mr. Jef-
‘ samy, it being already known that he
‘ has absconded from his house.

‘ This, Madam, my father heard last
‘ night at a coffee-house; and, more-
‘ over, that the people of the tavern, as
‘ well as a gentleman who, it seems,
‘ was with Bellpine when he was met
‘ by Mr. Jessamy, have offered to de-
‘ pose, that he took him aside, prevailed
‘ with him to leave his company, and
‘ go with him into a private room, where
‘ he soon after left him for dead.

‘ I cannot pretend to any understand-
‘ ing in such matters; but they say that,
‘ in the eye of the law, these circum-
‘ stances will make the affair appear
‘ very black on the side of Mr. Jessamy;
‘ and that the fact will not be con-
‘ sidered as a rencounter, or a fair duel,
‘ but as a downright premeditated mur-
‘ der.

‘ As I cannot suppose that to what-
‘ ever place Mr. Jessamy is retired you
‘ are ignorant of it, I thought it high-
‘ ly proper to give you this intimation,
‘ to the end you may apprize him of the
‘ greatness of his danger, and warn him
‘ to keep extremely close: indeed, I
‘ should never have forgiven myself,
‘ if, by neglecting to do so, any worse
‘ accident than what has already hap-
‘ pened, should ensue; but I will trou-
‘ ble you no farther, than to assure you
‘ that I am, with all due respect, Ma-
‘ dam, your most obedient, humble ser-
‘ vant,

‘ S. CHIT.

‘ P. S. My poor father is troubled
‘ beyond measure at this event;
‘ and swears, that, old as he is, if
‘ he had sooner been convinced of
‘ the baseness of Bellpine, which
‘ till now he never was, he would
‘ have taken upon himself to pu-
‘ nish it.’

Jenny had but just finished the read-
ing this epistle, when she was convinced
of the truth of the intelligence it con-
tained; the officers of justice came in;
produced their warrant; and one of
them very civilly entreated her leave to
do what, by virtue of their commission,
they were empowered to have done with-
out it.

She seemed a little surprized notwith-
standing, and said with an air of some
resentment, that it seemed very odd to
her that they should come to search her
lodgings for a gentleman; to which an-
other of them, more surly than he who
had spoke first, replied, that they had
orders to search not only her lodgings,
but all that house, and every other which
Mr. Jessamy had been known to fre-
quent. She said no more, but suffered
them to pass wherever they would, and
they discharged their duty with so much
diligence, as to leave no place unlook-
ed into, that was big enough to have
concealed a much less person than him
they sought for.

Though Jenny had nothing to ap-
prehend on this score, yet the sight of
these men, and the errand they came
upon, was an extreme shock to her; but
she presently received another yet great-
er, when the person with whom she
boarded told her, without considering
the consequence of what he said, that
he was credibly informed that notice
had been sent to all the ports, to pre-
vent Mr. Jessamy from making his
escape out of the kingdom. These
words struck her with such a horror,
that she was very near falling into fits;
and it was not in the power of all that
both he and his wife could say after-
wards to pacify her grief, or to make
her be persuaded that Mr. Jessamy must
needs be in Calais before any orders to
stop him could arrive at Dover. They
remonstrated to her, that if he travelled
all night, as it was not to be doubted
but he did, he would certainly reach
the port by the next day at noon; and
as there was always some one or other
of

of the packets ready, might embark the same hour he came; 'So that, my dear Miss,' cried he merrily, 'you may depend upon it, your lover, long before now, has been regaling himself with good Burgundy, and some *Quelque chose* or other, *a-la-mode de France*.'

She could not help allowing the reasonableness of his arguments; but imagination, that creative faculty, which has the power to raise us to the utmost pinnacle of happiness, or sink us into the lowest depths of despair, formed so many accidents which might retard her dear *Jemmy's* journey, and render him too late to avoid the pursuit made after him, that she could not think she ought to flatter herself with the hopes of his being safe, till she was positively assured he was so.

CHAP. XI.

CONTAINS SOME OCCURRENCES DESERVING THE ATTENTION OF THE READER.

IN a continual rack of thought, to which all the persuasions of her friends could not give the least intermission, did the fair heroine of this history pass her nights and days, till *Jemmy*, being safely arrived at Calais, sent her the following epistle:

' TO MISS JESSAMY.

' MY FOR EVER DEAR, DEAR JENNY!
' **T**HE concern I saw you under on my departure has hung more heavy on my spirits than even the occasion that enforced it; but I assure you that none of your commands have been lost upon me; I have taken all the precautions that human prudence could suggest not to render your kind wishes unavailing, and preserve a life which I am so happy as to know you set some value upon. The date of this will inform you that I have now reached an asylum, from whence it is not in the power of my enemies to snatch me; but perhaps, after all, I might have spared your tender heart the cruel alarm I have given it, and myself the trouble of coming hither. Since I left London I have been tempt-

ed to hope that *Belpine* is not dead, and that it was no more than a swoon in which I left him; if so, with what transport shall I soon return to thank my dear *Jenny* for all her unequalled goodness!

' It is you, and you alone, my everlasting charmer, that can make either my life or liberty a blessing; and when this cursed affair is once over, I shall then doubly taste the sweets of both; for oh, my soul! I now feel that the apprehensions of being deprived of you are infinitely more terrible to me than those of becoming an exile, an outlaw, a vagabond. But I will not turn the eyes of my imagination that way; my reason, my resolution, faulter at it; and, as *Ottaway* says—

"Madness lies there, and hell is in the thought."

' I will rather endeavour to believe the best, and that the first intelligence I receive from England will entirely banish these sad ideas from my mind; but whatever I suffer, or shall hereafter suffer, I beg my dear *Jenny* will exert all her fortitude to repel the invasions of an over-much grief and pity: let your answer to this assure me, that you bear with moderation this sudden turn in our late blest condition, which is the only consolation can at present be received by him who is, with a love unalterable, soul of my soul, your most faithfully, and most passionately devoted lover and servant,

' J. JESSAMY.

' P. S. In the distraction of my thoughts, I had like to have sent this away without informing you where an answer might find me; pardon therefore the wildness of my brain, and direct for me at *Monsieur Grandfere's*, the Silver Lion, in Calais.'

The joy which filled the affectionate heart of *Jenny*, on finding her dear *Jemmy* had so happily avoided all the pursuit that might be made after him, was so great, that for a time it entirely dissipated all her other anxiety. But the ease she enjoyed was momentary; all

all the information the enquiries that her friends could procure was, that though Bellpine was not dead, he was far from being out of danger; and the consideration of what consequences his death must produce, in case his wound should prove mortal, rendered her incapable of enjoying any lasting or perfect satisfaction.

It cannot be supposed that she contented herself with once perusing a letter she had so much languished for; she read it over and over, and the oftener she did so, the more a flood of tenderness poured in upon her soul; but the reader will be better able to judge, by her own words, of the disposition she was in, than by any description I am able to give of it.

After having well weighed what apprehensions they were which seemed to give him the most pain, she thought herself obliged, both by love and gratitude, to make use of her utmost endeavours to remove them, as will be seen in the answer she gave to his letter, which was wrote in the following terms:

‘ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

‘ MY VERY DEAR JEMMY,

‘ I Congratulate you on your fortunate arrival at Calais: you cannot more rejoice on finding yourself in a place of safety, than I have done in the knowledge that you are so. I have also the pleasure to acquaint you, that Bellpine still lives; I wish I could lengthen the intelligence by adding, that there are hopes of his recovery; but that is a satisfaction as yet denied us.

‘ But wherefore, my dear Jemmy, do you wound my heart with apprehensions for which you have not the least ground? Do you know so little of your Jenny as to believe that any change of circumstances can change her sentiments in regard to you? No; if the vain supposition of losing me disturbs your peace, henceforth be perfectly at rest; for be assured, that wherever you are, I will be.

‘ Take not this as a flight of sudden passion, which I may hereafter be tempted to repent of and retract, but as the firm and determined resolution of my soul, founded on the principles

‘ of honour, of duty, and of justice, as well as inclination.

‘ Love for each other, my dear Jessamy, was the first lesson taught us in our most early years, and I have too long been accustomed to the practice, to be capable of swerving from it: should therefore the fate of Bellpine, which Heaven forbid, be such as our worst fears suggest, you have no more to do, on the news of it, than to go directly into Paris, and provide a proper place for my reception; and there, if you continue to desire it, the English ambassador’s chaplain may fulfil the engagement made for us between our parents.

‘ Farewel: I flatter myself that you will find some satisfaction in the assurance I now give you of being, with all the tenderness you can wish or expect, my dear Jemmy, sincerely, faithfully, and ever yours,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. I must do our common friends the justice to let you know they are greatly affected at your misfortune, all of them at least that I see; indeed, if they were not, they would find but little welcome from me. Once more adieu; I expect to hear from you again by the first post.’

Jenny, not doubting but what she had wrote would afford great relief to the anxieties of her lover, found in that thought sufficient to calm those she had felt within herself. Such is the effect of a real tenderness, as to make us take pleasure in every thing that we imagine will give pleasure to the person beloved.

And now let those readers, who in the beginning of this history were apt to look on Jemmy and Jenny as two insensibles, acknowledge their mistake, and be convinced, that flames which burn with rapidity at first are soonest wasted; and that a gentle, and almost imperceptible glow of a pure affection, when once raised up by any extraordinary incident, sends forth a stronger and more lasting heat.

I remember to have read a little pamphlet, entitled, *Reflections on the different Effects of Love*, which contains many pretty observations on the subject

ject I am speaking of; but I know of none more just than this of Mr. Dryden:

‘ Love various minds does variously inspire;
 ‘ He stirs in gentle natures gentle fire,
 ‘ Like that of incense on the altars laid;
 ‘ But raging flames tempestuous souls invade,
 ‘ A fire which every wind of passion blows;
 ‘ With pride it mounts, and with revenge it
 ‘ glows.’

It may easily be perceived by those who consider the motives on which the events of this history depend, that our lovers were not thus stirred up by accidents relating merely to themselves, but by such as concerned each other: Jemmy had not fought with Bellpine but for the discontent and affronts which he thought his dear Jenny had suffered through his base artifices; nor would Jenny have discovered any part of the warmth she now did, had she not been invigorated by the perplexity and danger of her Jemmy. Nothing certainly can be more truly worthy of admiration than the love, the constancy, the generosity of this amiable lady, who at her years could so readily renounce her native country, kindred, and all the amusements to which her youth had been accustomed, and resolve to live in a perpetual banishment, if, by the death of Bellpine, the man ordained to be her husband in his more prosperous circumstances, should now be reduced to the condition of an exile. Nor was Jemmy, gay and unthinking as he has sometimes appeared, at all inferior to his charming mistress, in giving her the most unquestionable and exalted proofs of the sincerity and disinterestedness of his passion, as the next chapter will declare.

CHAP. XII.

RECITES A PASSAGE WHICH WILL CERTAINLY BE EXTREMELY AGREEABLE TO ALL THE LADIES: IT IS MUCH TO BE FEARED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE BUT VERY FEW OF THEM WHO CAN, WITH ANY REASON, FLATTER THEMSELVES WITH EXPERIENCING THE LIKE.

JENNY, who had the mortification of hearing every day that Bellpine grew rather worse than better, began to

call to mind every trifling accident that had happened to give her any disgust in England, to the end that she might have the less love for it, and be more reconciled to the thoughts of leaving it for ever. She found it, indeed, a thing of no great difficulty to conquer all the reluctance she might at first have on that score: the society of the man she loved, and by whom she was so much beloved, was an over-balance for all she was about to quit for his sake; and her whole mind was now taken up with the manner in which she should order her affairs, so as to be prepared to go whenever the circumstances of things should call her.

Her resolution being settled, her thoughts, by degrees, became so too, and she now enjoyed more serenity than she had known since the accident that drove Jemmy from her; but the post not bringing her a letter as she expected, some part of her former discontents began to revive in her: she was, however, too well assured of his punctuality not to impute this disappointment to some other cause than his neglect.

She soon found that she had done him no more than justice in this point. Mr. Morgan came the next morning to visit her. As she had not seen him since she was a girl, his coming at this juncture a little surprized her, and he kept her in suspense for some time, by making her a thousand compliments, after the fashion of old men, on the improvements he found in her stature and beauty, before he related to her the business which had brought him thither.

At last, though not till after many circumlocutions, by way of prelude—
 ‘ I have a present for you, my pretty lady,’ said he; ‘ I received a letter last night from my good Mr. Jessamy, and something inclosed for you, which he commissioned me to deliver into your own hands: here it is,’ continued he, giving her a packet; ‘ take it, I believe it will not be displeasing to you.’— ‘ I have no apprehensions of receiving any thing that can be so, either from him or you, Sir,’ replied she; ‘ you will, therefore, pardon my impatience to see what it contains.’— ‘ Aye, aye,’ cried he, ‘ read it by all means; I would have you read it while I am here.’

He then retired to a window, and took up a book while she opened the packet,

packet, in which was a large parchment, heavy with the weight of seals, and a letter from Jemmy containing these lines.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY.

‘ WITH what words, O thou more
‘ than woman! thou angel of
‘ thy sex! shall I express that rush of
‘ joyous astonishment, that extasy,
‘ which, on the reading your dear letter,
‘ overwhelmed my heart! Can you
‘ then resolve to leave your native country,
‘ with all the charms you once
‘ found in it? Can you do this for my
‘ unworthy sake, consent to share my
‘ fate, and live in exile with your
‘ Jemmy? Yes, I know you can; you
‘ have said it, and will not promise
‘ without meaning to perform.

‘ Thus transcendently blessed in your
‘ affection, the goods of fortune would
‘ be below my care if you had no interest
‘ in them; nor would even life itself
‘ be of any estimation with me, were it
‘ not dear to you: but as they both are
‘ yours, eternally devoted to you, they
‘ ought not to be neglected by me.

‘ On my relating my affair with
‘ Bellpine, in all its unhappy circumstances,
‘ to a lawyer who happened to
‘ come over with me, he told me I
‘ ought to take proper methods for securing
‘ my estate, in case the wound
‘ I had given should prove mortal: I
‘ approved of his advice; and as there
‘ is no English attorney at Calais, he
‘ has been so good as to draw up an
‘ instrument for that purpose himself,
‘ which is the same I now send to you.

‘ You will find by it, my dear Jenny,
‘ that I am no longer possessed of
‘ any lands or hereditaments; you are
‘ the mistress of all that once was mine:
‘ to whom, indeed, should I commit
‘ my estate but to her who has my soul
‘ in keeping? I have wrote to Mr.
‘ Morgan and Mr. Ellwood to assist
‘ you in whatever cares may attend
‘ this accession, and also to my steward
‘ and house-keeper to receive their orders
‘ henceforward from you, who
‘ have now the only right to command
‘ and to direct their services.

‘ What remittances I may have occasion
‘ for, I shall become your petitioner
‘ to grant, and doubt not but
‘ your charity will extend itself as far
‘ as you think my wants may reason-

‘ ably require. I am sure that I can
‘ feel none of the thousandth part so
‘ great as that of your dear society,
‘ which, without my daring to ask, you
‘ have promised to relieve.

‘ I should be glad, methinks, however,
‘ to know the certainty of my
‘ doom; that is, whether I may have
‘ hope of returning to England, or
‘ must content myself with being a denizen
‘ of France; though in whatever
‘ place my lot is cast, fate will find it
‘ very difficult to render me unhappy,
‘ while permitted to subscribe myself,
‘ with the most perfect and pure passion,
‘ my dearest Jenny’s fervently
‘ and unalterably devoted servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. I need not tell my dear Jenny
‘ how much impatience
‘ I shall long for the arrival of the
‘ next mail, and every mail, till
‘ we are so happy as to meet again.’

Having read the letter, she unfolded the writing which accompanied it, and found it was a deed of conveyance to herself of Jemmy’s whole estate, both real and personal. As she knew not well the nature of these things, nor for what end this had been done, it threw her into so deep a reverie that she forgot Mr. Morgan was in the room. But that gentleman perceiving she had done reading, returned to the seat he had lately quitted; and, taking her by the hand, asked her, with a smile, what she thought of the gift her lover had made her. ‘ Indeed, Sir,’ answered she, ‘ I know not what to think; and
‘ should be at a very great loss how to
‘ behave on the occasion, if I did not
‘ depend on being directed by one or
‘ other of the two worthy persons mentioned in Mr. Jessamy’s letter.’

He then explained to her all she wanted to know, and concluded with some compliments on the confidence Mr. Jessamy reposed in her: ‘ If ever
‘ I see him again,’ said he pleasantly,
‘ I shall tell him that he relies much on
‘ his own merit to imagine he can secure
‘ the affections of so fine a lady,
‘ after endowing her with a fortune
‘ which may entitle her to the addresses
‘ of the first nobleman in the kingdom.’

‘ He need not be very vain,’ returned

ed she, 'to be entirely free from all apprehensions on that score. But, Sir,' continued she, 'there is another danger, which, perhaps, he has not thought of; I have a kinsman, who, though a very distant one, is yet my heir, in case I die unmarried, and would certainly, after my demise, seize on every thing which could be proved had been in my possession at that time.'

'Demise!' cried Mr. Morgan. 'How can such a thought come into your head? A virgin in her bloom talk of dying!'—'Things more unlikely, Sir, have come to pass,' said she; 'and I am for leaving nothing to chance, especially on such an account as this: as the first proof, therefore, of that assistance Mr. Jessamy makes me hope for from you, I must entreat you will provide me an able lawyer, that I may make my will, and, by bequeathing back to Mr. Jessamy his own estate, with my whole fortune annexed to it, unite both, according as our parents always intended they should be.'

Mr. Morgan looked on her with the highest admiration all the time she was speaking; but making no immediate answer, she went on, insisting that he would do as she desired; to which he at last consented, and promised to bring an attorney with him in the afternoon: they had some farther conversation together, in which Jenny displayed herself so well, without aiming to do so, that he departed quite amazed and charmed to find such generosity, such justice, and such prudence, in a person of her years.

When she was left alone, and had leisure to reflect on what Jemmy had done, it did not seem at all strange to her that he should have reposed so much confidence in her, because she thought there was not a possibility for any woman in the world to be wicked enough to abuse such a trust; but she wondered at the haste he made to execute a deed of this nature, which she could see no necessity for on the score of what had passed between him and Bellpine, at least as yet. After a little pause—'It must certainly be,' cried she, 'that the dear generous man has caused this instrument to be drawn up merely for my sake, that if any unforeseen accident should snatch him suddenly

from the world, I should then remain in an undisturbed possession of all he left behind: no other motive can have induced him to act in this manner; and it was only the secret sympathy of my soul with his, that has put it into my head to make a will in his favour.' It pleased her to think she had found a way to be even with him in his tender care, and longed for the return of Mr. Morgan, that she might put in execution what she had devised.

That gentleman came in the afternoon, and, according to the promise she had exacted from him, brought with him an able lawyer of his particular acquaintance, whom, as soon as the first civilities were over, she immediately set to work upon the business for which she had desired his presence.

The writing being entirely finished in all its forms, and witnessed by Mr. Morgan and the people of the house, whom Jenny had ordered to be called up for that purpose, she deposited it in Mr. Morgan's hands, desiring him to keep it till she should die, unless some accident should oblige her to demand it back: this he assured her he would do, still affecting to smile, though admiring within himself a precaution so uncommon in a young lady. But whatever either he or his friend the lawyer might think of her on this occasion, they were afterwards convinced, by the vivacity and sprightliness of her conversation and behaviour during the whole time they continued with her, that it was not by any melancholy vapours she had been instigated to the step she had taken, and which appeared so extraordinary to them, as indeed it well might do to persons who never had an opportunity of being acquainted with the greatness of her mind.

CHAP. XIII.

AFFORDS LESS MATTER EITHER OF INSTRUCTION OR ENTERTAINMENT THAN MANY OF THE FORMER; THOUGH PERHAPS MORE OF BOTH THAN CAN BE FOUND IN SOME OTHER HISTORIES OF THE SAME NATURE WITH THIS.

HOW preferable are the enjoyments of the mind to those of the body! Persons of a truly delicate way of

of thinking find a much greater pleasure in their own contemplations, on a delightful subject, than those of less refined ideas are capable of tasting, in the utmost gratification of the senses.

Our amiable Jenny felt a more perfect satisfaction in the proof she had received of her lover's affection, and in that she had just shewn of her own for him, than she had ever known when with him; and no cross accident had intervened to oblige either of them to exert and display their mutual tenderness. She was in a most delightful situation of mind on this occasion, when Mr. Morgan made her another morning visit, on a business which, he doubted not, but would greatly add to her contentment. It was this.

The sincere good-will he had towards Jemmy had made him indefatigable in his endeavours to find out the true state of Bellpine's condition; he had gone and sent several times to the house where he lodged, without being able to get any satisfactory account, sometimes being told one thing, and sometime another; they even refused to let him know who were the surgeons that attended him: this, however, he got intelligence of from the people of the tavern where the accident had happened; the first to whom he applied seemed a little uneasy at the questions he put to him; made very short and evasive answers, the plainest of which was, That if the gentleman lived, it would be a miracle.

Mr. Morgan, not contenting himself with this, went directly to the other, who was the same that had been sent by Jemmy, and whom he found of a much more communicative disposition, though less able to give him the information he desired: he said, that on examining the wound, he had thought it a very bad one; but when he went the next morning to visit Mr. Bellpine, he was told by somebody about him, that there was no need of his attendance, and that he was not permitted to stay in the room even while the first dressings were taken off, though he had earnestly requested it. Mr. Morgan then asked him, if he apprehended the wound to be mortal by what he had seen of it at first? 'I then thought it so,' replied the surgeon; 'for, had it been as I imagined, he must have died in twelve hours:

'but as he has lived till now, I think I may safely pronounce him out of danger, except a fever takes him.'

He then went on, and gave so many reasons, from the structure of the human body, to prove that if Bellpine's wound had been mortal, he must have died long before the time which had elapsed since his receiving it, that the hearty old gentleman was quite convinced, and ran immediately to make Jenny partaker of the joyful news.

She was, indeed, extremely pleased; but said she could not conceive what motive should induce Bellpine or his friends to give out that he was still in danger, if it was not really so. 'Spite,' cried Mr. Morgan; 'nothing but spite, as my friend Lee somewhere has it:

"Spite, by the gods! proud spite, and burning envy."

'I see into his design,' continued he, 'as well as if I were of his cabinet-council. The venomous revengeful rascal thinks, as long as he can make people believe his life is despaired of, Mr. Jessamy will be obliged to keep out of the way: but he may be out in his politicks; the surgeon assures me, that he will depose upon oath that the wound is not mortal; and if so, Mr. Jessamy may come over as soon as he pleases; bail will be taken for him.'—'Ah, Sir, let him not trust to that,' cried Jenny hastily; 'and I beseech you do not advise him to it when you write.'—'I advise him, Madam!' answered he, 'not I indeed; I shall only tell him what I think; he may do as he pleases.'—'You may be certain, Sir,' resumed she, 'that I should greatly rejoice in Mr. Jessamy's return, if he could come without any hazard either of his life or liberty; but you must pardon me, if I am not altogether so sanguine in this matter as you seem to be: I am apt to hope, and believe with you, that Bellpine is not in so dangerous a way as is pretended; but then, methinks, we ought not to build too much upon the asseveration of this surgeon, whose judgment we cannot be sure is infallible.'

Mr. Morgan was about to say something in answer to this, but was prevented; Jenny's servant opened the door

instantly, and told her that Lady Speck was just coming up stairs; on which he took his leave for that time.

After the usual salutations of a first meeting were over, and they had seated themselves—'If the heart is to be judged by the countenance,' said Lady Speck, looking earnestly on her friend, 'I may hope, my dear, that yours is somewhat less depressed than it has been of late.' On her speaking in this manner, Jenny made no scruple to repeat to her all she had been told by Mr. Morgan in regard to Bellpine's condition, and also the reasons which both of them had assigned for his causing it to be reported so much worse than in effect it was.

'Bellpine must certainly be one of the most mischievous fellows in the universe,' said Lady Speck; 'and since you have now got a more perfect intelligence of his situation, I may venture to let you know, that nothing can be more terrible than the account given of it by his servant, both to Sir Robert and Mr. Lovegrove; who, I assure you, did not fail to make the enquiries they promised when they were here last; and it has been only because they were unwilling either to deceive you, or to be the bearers of an unwelcome truth, that they have denied themselves the pleasure of waiting on you for some days.'

Jenny expressed herself in the most grateful terms for the generous concern those gentlemen had seemed to take in her affairs; and then began to turn the conversation on some other topic: but there was something in the behaviour of Bellpine, which appeared so peculiar as well as base, in the opinion of Lady Speck, that she could talk of little else all the time she staid, which, indeed, was not very long, her ladyship being in her dishabille, and in haste to go home to dress for dinner.

She was no sooner gone, than Jenny's servant acquainted her, that a lady who called herself Sophia had been to wait on her. 'Sophia!' cried she hastily; 'why then did you not shew her up?'—'You had company, Madam,' answered he, 'and she staid the rather chose to wait on you when you were quite alone, and that she would come again in the afternoon to see if you were so.'

If the reader has forgot this young

lady, he may have recourse to the second chapter of the first volume, where he will find her character at large; and now need only to be told, that Jenny, who had not heard of her being in town, was extremely glad that she should have a person near her, in whom she placed more confidence than in most others of her acquaintance.

The pleasure of this friend's return did not, however, make her forget that it was past-day, and that she had an obligation to discharge, which could not be dispensed with by any other; and, therefore, to prevent any interruption which delay might occasion, sat down immediately, and wrote the following lines:

'TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

'MY DEAR JEMMY,

'I Received the trust you reposed in me, of which I shall be a very faithful steward; but I have just heard something which makes me hope you might have spared yourself that trouble. Your worthy friend Mr. Morgan will write to you the particulars, and, perhaps, subjoin some advice, which, though I am certain he means well, cannot consent you should comply with. So much as I prize your presence, I should tremble to behold you here, while there remains even the most distant menace either to your life or liberty.

'A little time, of course, must put an end to our suspense; till then, therefore, I conjure you, content yourself with the assurance I have given you, and now again repeat, that if you cannot come to me, I will go to you, and endeavour, by every thing in my power, to soften the asperity of all other losses.

'I fear, indeed, you pass your days in a manner uncomfortable enough; without friends, without acquaintance, without any companion but your own melancholy thoughts; nothing to please, or even to amuse your mind. I am ignorant of the place you are in; I only know it is on the sea-coast: there, methinks, I see you often wandering, casting a wishful eye towards what you left behind, and almost cursing fortune for the deprivation. Tell me, my Jemmy, does my fancy paint your situation such as it

‘ it is? I shall rejoice to find myself deceived, and to hear that Calais is not wanting in matters of agreeable entertainment. Believe, you can give no account so welcome to me as that of your being perfectly easy: endeavour, at least, to make yourself so, I beseech you, till the circumstances of things permit you to be happy, and to make happy all your friends, particularly her who is, with an unfeigned affection, dear Jemmy, yours eternally,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. I cannot close this without once more conjuring you, not for your own sake but mine, not to think of returning till we shall be well assured that Bellpine has left his chamber.’

She soon found how much she had been in the right to lay hold of the first opportunity to prepare the above, otherwise she might have been prevented from doing it all that day; for Sophia, who had a great deal to say to her, came very early in the afternoon.

CHAP. XIV.

CONTAINS A VERY STRANGE AND DETESTABLE INSTANCE OF PERFIDIOUSNESS AND INGRATITUDE, IN A PERSON OF THE MOST HONOURABLE VOCATION.

THESE two young ladies, who, from their childhood, had preserved an entire friendship for each other, could not meet, after an absence of many months, without the utmost demonstrations of affection on both sides; after which Jenny gently reproached the other, as having been very remiss of late in writing to her; and that, whenever she did so, her letters had been short, reserved, and such as ordinarily pass between persons who converse together merely through complaisance.

‘ Your charge would be very just,’ said Sophia, ‘ had it been in my power to have acted otherwise than I did; but indeed, my dear Miss Jessamy, I had nothing to write, except such things as were utterly improper for me to communicate by the post. I am now, however,’ continued she,

with a deep sigh, ‘ come to tell you all, as well as to take my everlasting leave.’

These words, and the manner in which they were delivered, threw Jenny into so great an astonishment, that she had not the power of asking an explanation of them; which the other perceiving, saved her the trouble of speaking, and went on.

‘ Yes,’ continued she, ‘ I shall very shortly be removed from all that ever yet have known me; shall quit England as soon as the vessel that is to carry me is ready to put to sea, which I hope will be in a very few days; nor, when you have heard my unhappy story, will you think it strange that I should be impatient to go from a place where I have received such cruel injustice, as, perhaps, no woman but myself ever met with.’

‘ Heavens! of what nature?’ cried Jenny with some eagerness. ‘ Of a most monstrous, and I believe, unprecedented one,’ replied she: ‘ but I will keep you no longer in suspense; you shall at once be let into the secret of those wrongs I have sustained, and of the folly which exposed me to them.’

Finding Jenny made no answer, but was prepared to give attention to what she was about to say, she wiped off some tears, which, in spite of her endeavours to restrain them, fell from her eyes, and then began the recital she had promised, in the following terms.

THE HISTORY OF SOPHIA.

‘ YOU may remember, my dear ‘ Miss Jessamy,’ said she, ‘ in what a rage my brother flew out of the house after the ridiculous adventure you was witness of, the last time you favoured me with a visit; he then went no farther than to a gentleman’s seat about four miles distant; but from thence proceeded to London, where he continued full three months: on his return, he appeared very pen- sive and discontented, which I at first imputed to the disappointment he had received from the lady you saw; but I soon found it arose from a quite different cause. He had, it seems, mortgaged the best part of his estate to discharge some debts he had contracted at play; the only vice I know him guilty of, but to which he has ‘ always

‘ always been too much addicted: he had the generosity, however, to pay my fortune, which was but five and twenty hundred pounds, into the bank. He now gave me the bills, and told me, that he must go and live in the southern parts of France till he had retrieved his circumstances, and that he had spoke to a gentleman about letting his house; but added, that I should be welcome to stay in it, and have the use of every thing, till a tenant could be found, if I chose to do so. This offer, having my own reasons for it, I gladly accepted of. He had before prepared every thing for his departure, and in four days left me to myself.

‘ You will, doubtless, wonder that I should chuse to remain in a great lone house without any companion, and be at the expence of keeping two maids and a man-servant, which the income of my little fortune could ill afford, rather than come to town, where I might have been boarded in a genteel family, and lived much cheaper, and more agreeably in the opinion of every body but myself. I will tell you my reason for all this; it was love; love, that fatal phrenzy of our sex, that sure destruction of all that is dear to womankind. I ought to blush even at the remembrance I ever was directed by it, much more to confess the shameful folly.’

‘ Hold, my dear Sophia,’ cried Jenny, interrupting her, ‘ take care what you say: Mr. Dryden was certainly as good a judge of human nature as you can pretend to be; and he tells us, that—

“ Love’s an heroick passion, which can find
 “ No room in any base degenerate mind;
 “ It kindles all the soul with honour’s fire,
 “ To make the lover worthy his desire.”

‘ And I am of opinion, that a virtuous love, such as I doubt not yours was, ought never to be repented or ashamed of.’—‘ I allow the truth of what you say,’ answered Sophia; ‘ but then it must be a love conducted with prudence, and for a worthy object. Mine, alas! had neither the one nor the other of these excuses to plead in its defence, as you will presently be convinced.’

Here she stopped to give passage to

some sighs which had been labouring in her bosom; after which, growing a little more composed, she went on in the prosecution of her narrative.

‘ While my brother was at London,’ resumed she, ‘ I unfortunately, as it has proved, happened into the acquaintance of a young officer in the army, called Willmore. The first time I saw him was at a gentleman’s house about a mile distant from ours, where I sometimes visited: though there were several other ladies in the company, he seemed to take a particular notice of me, and I could not avoid doing so of him. He has, indeed, every thing in his person that can attract the eye, and captivate the heart; he is handsome, well made, genteel, has abundance of wit and vivacity; and, though he talks a great deal, never speaks but to the purpose.

‘ When I took my leave, he would needs see me home, though I had a servant with me, and but three little fields to cross. I refused this offer; but must own I could not help being very well pleased that he persisted in it. In short, he came home with me; and though, as we walked, he entertained me only with common subjects of conversation, yet he treated them in such a manner as appeared to me very agreeable.

‘ Among other things, happening to tell me that he had lodgings at Windsor, and was almost always there, when not obliged to be with the regiment, I said it was a thing seldom heard of, that a gay young gentleman, like him, should prefer a little country town to the pleasures of London: to which he replied, that hunting and reading were his favourite pleasures. “ The one,” said he, “ I frequently take with very good company; and the other I am here more at liberty to indulge myself in than I could possibly be in London.” He then asked me if I took any delight in the latter of these amusements; and on my answering that I did—“ Because, Madam,” rejoined he, “ I have all the publick papers and new pamphlets constantly sent down to me as they come out; and, if you will give me leave, will wait on you with such of them as I shall find worthy of your perusal.”

‘ Though I plainly saw this was no
 ‘ more

‘ more than a pretence to visit me, yet
 ‘ I thought it so handsome a one, and
 ‘ afforded me so good an excuse for
 ‘ granting him the permission he de-
 ‘ sired, that I hesitated not to tell him
 ‘ that I should readily accept, and be
 ‘ thankful for, the favour he men-
 ‘ tioned.

‘ This was the method he took to
 ‘ introduce himself. He was almost
 ‘ every day bringing me some new
 ‘ book or other; and, in return for this
 ‘ civility, I lent him such as he chose
 ‘ to read out of my brother’s collection,
 ‘ which is esteemed a very good one. At
 ‘ first, our conversation turned chiefly
 ‘ on the subjects with which we had
 ‘ mutually obliged each other; but,
 ‘ after a few visits, he threw off that re-
 ‘ straint he had hitherto been under,
 ‘ and professed himself my lover.

‘ As I have already confessed the
 ‘ liking I had of his person, you will
 ‘ not expect to hear that I received the
 ‘ declaration of his passion with any
 ‘ disdain; on the contrary, I am afraid
 ‘ I listened to it with too visible an ap-
 ‘ probation: but, however that might
 ‘ be, (for, indeed, I do not well re-
 ‘ member how I behaved at that time)
 ‘ all that I know is, that I forbade not
 ‘ his addresses.

‘ I will not give you the trouble of
 ‘ hearing, nor myself the confusion of
 ‘ repeating, how very easily I was won
 ‘ to give credit to every thing he said
 ‘ in relation to his pretended passion;
 ‘ for such you will find it was; and
 ‘ not only pretended for the sake of
 ‘ gallantry and amusement, but for the
 ‘ carrying on a design the most low,
 ‘ base, and dishonourable, that ever en-
 ‘ tered the heart of man, much less of
 ‘ a gentleman, to conceive or put in
 ‘ practice.

‘ It was in the height of his court-
 ‘ ship that my brother came home. The
 ‘ hurry of his affairs, the discontent he
 ‘ was in, and the short time he staid,
 ‘ hindered me from saying any thing
 ‘ to him concerning my new lover:
 ‘ but you now may perceive the mo-
 ‘ tive which induced me so readily to
 ‘ embrace the offer he made me of stay-
 ‘ ing in his house after he was gone. I
 ‘ knew Willmore was fond of the
 ‘ country; and I dreaded lest I should
 ‘ see him less frequently in town: fool
 ‘ that I was, not to consider that a man

‘ who truly loved would follow me
 ‘ any where!

‘ As we grew more familiar in con-
 ‘ versation, I found he was much better
 ‘ acquainted with the circumstances of
 ‘ our family than I could have thought
 ‘ he was. Among other things, he one
 ‘ day mentioned my brother’s late mis-
 ‘ carriage; and asked me, with some
 ‘ concern, whether it had been any pre-
 ‘ judice to my fortune. I told him that
 ‘ it had not, and related to him how
 ‘ tender he had been of me in that
 ‘ point; at which he seemed extremely
 ‘ pleased, and said no more upon that
 ‘ subject.

‘ Soon after this he went to London,
 ‘ where he staid upwards of a week; a
 ‘ much longer time than ever he had
 ‘ done since my acquaintance with him.
 ‘ The same day which brought him
 ‘ again to Windsor, brought him also
 ‘ to visit me; but though his expressions
 ‘ were, I think, more endearing and
 ‘ more passionate than ever they had
 ‘ been, I perceived there was a certain
 ‘ air of melancholy about him, which
 ‘ very much affected me: I could not
 ‘ forbear taking notice of it to him;
 ‘ and asked him, with more tenderness
 ‘ than perhaps became me, if any ill
 ‘ accident had happened to him since
 ‘ he left me. He told me not any; but
 ‘ added, that he had been a little vexed,
 ‘ and could not help thinking himself
 ‘ a very unlucky fellow.

‘ On my farther desiring him to let
 ‘ me know the occasion of his chagrin,
 ‘ he told me, that he could not content
 ‘ himself with the condition of a subal-
 ‘ tern; that he had never entered into
 ‘ the army but with the hopes of rising
 ‘ in it; nor had accepted of a lieuten-
 ‘ nancy, which was the commission he
 ‘ then bore, but with the expectation
 ‘ of being soon a captain. “ Now,”
 ‘ said he, “ just at this juncture, an old
 ‘ officer has got leave to sell out; and
 ‘ I might have his commission for about
 ‘ a thousand guineas and my own in
 ‘ exchange, which I have a gentleman
 ‘ ready to purchase. This it is, my
 ‘ dear Sophia,” added he, “ that has
 ‘ so much disconcerted me; for, though
 ‘ I have offered a very large premium,
 ‘ and my own bond to pay the money
 ‘ quarterly, I can no way raise it.”

“ Bless me!” cried I, “ have you
 ‘ no friends, no relations, who, on
 ‘ such

“such an occasion would not advance that sum?” — “Yes, several,” answered he, “who would do it for a word speaking; but they are all of them either out of the kingdom, or at their country-seats, I know not how far off; and the thing must be done immediately, or not at all; and Heaven knows whether I shall ever meet with such an opportunity again!”

“Indeed, my dear Miss Jessamy,” continued she, “I thought it a great pity that any man, much more the person I loved, and intended to make my husband, should lose so considerable an advantage through the want of what was in my power to supply him with. I did not consider much on the matter; but stepped to my cabinet, and took out bank-bills to the amount of a thousand pounds, which I put directly into his hands. “There,” Mr. Willmore,” said I, “is the sum you stand in need of; and I hope it will not come too late to lay out in the purchase you mention.”

“Though I believe he saw enough into my weakness to expect I would do as I did, yet he seemed equally surprised as transported with it. “Well,” my dear Sophia,” cried he, kissing my hand, “this is generous indeed, and truly like yourself! But I hope,” continued he, “you will soon consent to reap some part of the benefit of the favour you have conferred; and, as promotions in the army must come by degrees, who knows but you may one day see your lover (I flatter myself, long before then your husband) at the head of a regiment, instead of a company?”

“I replied, that I wished him success for his own sake; and as to what related to myself, we would talk of that hereafter. He then told me, that he would go to London very early the next morning; and, at his return, bring with him a bond in exchange for the bills I had obliged him with: “Which,” added he, with a gay air, “if you should not think sufficient, I am ready to give you my person as a collateral security.”

She was in this part of her story when the tea-equipage, that important article of a lady’s drawing-room, was brought in; on which she was obliged to break off till it should be removed.

CHAP. XV.

IS ONLY A CONTINUATION OF THE SAME STORY.

THE ladies having finished their little regale, and the gentleman-usher of the ceremony withdrawn with his tea-kettle and-lanip, Jenny began to testify some impatience for the knowledge of an event which, as yet, she could have no other room to guess at than by the exclamations of Sophia.

“If I had not been infatuated to a degree beyond what ever woman was,” resumed that lady, “I must have seen that, whatever Willmore pretended, his head was much more taken up with the thoughts of his commission than of his passion for me; for, after the first retributions were over, he talked of little else during the whole time he staid.

“He took his leave, however, in a manner tender enough; and I remained perfectly satisfied with his behaviour, as well as with myself for what I had done. So high an idea had I both of his love and honour, that when, instead of seeing him in five or six days, as he had made me expect, I heard nothing of him in three whole weeks, I was far from entertaining the least suspicion of him; nor felt any other alarms than what proceeded from my fears that some ill accident might have befallen him.

“But at last he removed all my apprehensions on that score by sending me a letter, or rather billet, containing these lines.

“TO MISS SOPHIA *****.

“MADAM,

“I Have, at last, accomplished my affair, which took me up more time and expence than I imagined: all is now over, however; and there remains but one thing more to make me compleatly happy. I shall be at Windsor in a few days, and will then do myself the pleasure of waiting on you; till when, believe me, with great respect, Madam, your most humble and obedient servant,

“G. WILLMORE.”

‘You

‘ You look astonished, my dear Miss Jessamy,’ pursued she, perceiving Jenny did so; ‘ and well indeed you may! Did ever man write such a letter to a woman he courted, who he knew loved him, and from whom he had received so great an obligation? Yet, (would you think it possible?) not even this opened my blinded eyes! I doubted not but, by the one thing remaining to make him compleatly blessed, he meant the consummation of our marriage; and the kindness of that expression sufficed with me to atone for all the cool indifference of the rest.

‘ Eight days more, from the time of my receiving this epistle, were elapsed without my seeing or hearing any thing farther of him: but when, at the expiration of that time, he came, whatever doubts might have been beginning to rise in my mind, they all vanished as soon as he appeared, and were succeeded by a double portion of satisfaction.

‘ I know not whether it was owing to his being so long absent from me, or whether the success of his affairs had diffused a more than ordinary sprightliness through all his air, but, methought, he looked more charming, more engaging, than ever: the passion he pretended to have for me seemed also to be increased even to a romantick height; and, after telling me that his own lawyer being out of town, and not chusing to employ any other, he had not brought the bond he promised—“But what occasion,” cried he, eagerly kissing my hand, “is there for the formality of a bond, when you have my heart, my soul, in your possession? When myself, and all I am or ever shall be master of, is entirely at your command; never happy till you accept the offer!”

‘ In a word, he continued to press me so closely on the article of marriage all that whole evening, that, before we parted, I made him a kind of half promise; and, to confess the truth, (for I will hide nothing from you) I was at that time so much softened by the artifices he put in practice, that if I did not say positively I would be his, it was owing rather to my bashfulness than want of inclination to comply.

‘ Indeed, when I came to reason with

myself, I thought it would be a piece of silly nicety to keep him any longer in suspense; that his family, his person, his accomplishments, and the post he had now obtained, might entitle him to a woman of a larger fortune than I was mistress of; and that, putting love entirely out of the question, nobody would condemn the choice I had made of him. In short, my dear, having thus fixed my resolution, the next visit assured him of my consent; and I told him that I was ready to give him my hand, as soon as every thing necessary for that ceremony could be prepared.

‘ I had often heard him, in casual conversation, express a great dislike of publick weddings; and he now represented, that for ours to be so must infallibly be attended with many inconveniences. “For besides,” said he, “the ridiculous bustle of drums, trumpets, epithalamiums, that always disturb the slumbers of people on their first going to bed together with a licence, there are so many young officers of my acquaintance who would come the next morning to congratulate me on my happiness, as I know would be shocking to the modesty of my dear Sophia.”

‘ Finding I approved of what he said—“For the reasons I have mentioned,” resumed he, “Windfor would be the most improper place in the world: we both are so well known there, that, the moment we are tacked, the bells would immediately proclaim what we had been about. The thing can be done no where with so much privacy as in London; and, to tell you the truth, though perhaps you will laugh at my superstition,” continued he, “my father and mother were married at Ely Chapel: their whole lives were a series of love and joy, and I should like, methinks, that my happiness should be fixed at the same altar theirs was.”

‘ I could not, indeed, forbear railly- ing him a little on this whim; but replied, that I had not the least objection to the place he mentioned; but, on the contrary, should chuse that the ceremony should be performed there, rather than in any parish church whatever. He then told me, that, having flattered himself with finding me no less just to his

‘ passion than I now had been, he had already made some preparations, which he hoped would not be displeasing to me. I asked him of what nature; to which he replied, that he had an aunt, an excellent good old lady, whom he had made the confidante of his courtship to me; that by the character he had given her of me, she approved highly of the match; and that we should be welcome to an apartment in her house till we could take one for ourselves, and get it fitted up for our reception.

‘ To this he added, that she was a widow of a handsome jointure; that her eldest son had a large estate in Somersetshire, and her youngest was a captain in the navy; that she had two daughters, who were both unmarried, and lived with her; that they kept the best company: “So that, my dear,” continued he, “you will find you do not marry into a family you will have any cause to be ashamed of.”

‘ He said a great deal more in praise of these relations; all which I took for gospel; and was so much charmed with the character of my aunt that was to be, and two young cousins, that I almost longed to be with them; and it was presently concluded between us, that I should go with him to London the next day; that he should introduce me to these ladies; that he should leave me with them for that night, and return in the morning with a ring and licence, in order to put the last hand to the business of his courtship.

‘ Every thing being thus settled, as I then thought, much for my convenience and satisfaction, I slept that night without the least forebodings of the mischief that was just ready to fall upon me. About eleven the next morning, a chariot, by Willmore’s order, came to the door. I told my maids I was going on some business to London, but should come back in a few days, as I knew I was obliged to do, on account of delivering up the keys of the house, and all that was in it, to the person whom my brother had intrusted with the care of his affairs; so took nothing with me but some linen, and a wrapping-gown. I took up Willmore at the corner of a back lane, where he waited, by appoint-

ment, for me; and we drove directly to London.

‘ We alighted at the door of a handsome house in one of the streets near Hatton Garden, and were immediately shewed up into the dining-room, where we found a grave old gentlewoman, whose appearance answered very well to the description Willmore had given of her. He presented me to her with these words—“This, Madam,” said he, “is the lady I spoke of, and who has, at last, consented to make me happy.” She received me with a great shew of respect and kindness, but accompanied with a certain stiffness, which, I thought, had something of affectation in it; but this I imputed merely to the time in which she had been educated, according to the silly notion, that people of the last age were less free in their conversation than those of ours.

‘ The room we were in was very genteelly furnished; but what most attracted my eyes were the pictures of five or six young ladies, very different in their features and complexions, but all of them extremely handsome. I could not forbear expressing my admiration of these pieces to the old lady, who told me that two of them were drawn for her daughters, and the others for her nieces and cousins; and added, that she hoped one day to have the honour of seeing mine there. I replied, that I should make but an ill figure among so many beauties; on which she made many compliments not worth repeating.

‘ Chocolate and biscuits were the first things presented to us, and were soon after succeeded by a bottle of Madeira. The old lady said that she was disconcerted beyond measure; that not being certain of my coming, she was not provided in the manner she would have been for my reception; and particularly, that she had given her daughters leave to go on a party of pleasure with some persons of quality; but added, that they would be home in a day or two, and hoped her family would then be more agreeable to me. I was of her opinion, indeed, as to this last article; but could not avoid telling her, that nothing could be wanting where she was. This drew on so many compliments in return, that I should have been
‘ very

‘ very much embarrassed to reply, if
 ‘ Willmore, the only thing I have to
 ‘ thank him for, had not given a turn
 ‘ to the conversation.

‘ Soon after lighting the candles,
 ‘ supper was served in, which consisted
 ‘ of several small dishes, all in a fo-
 ‘ reign taste. When the cloth was
 ‘ taken away, and bottles and glasses
 ‘ set upon the table, the old lady began
 ‘ the King’s health in a bumper; then
 ‘ another to the Prince of Wales; and
 ‘ a third to the Duke of Cumberland.
 ‘ These having gone round, Willmore
 ‘ ran to the side-board, fetched a large
 ‘ water-glass, which filling to the
 ‘ brim—“ Here is the noble duke
 ‘ again,” cried he; “ we cannot toast
 ‘ his health too often! Here is to his
 ‘ Royal Highness, and prosperity to
 ‘ the army; may they increase and
 ‘ multiply till every housekeeper in
 ‘ London and Westminster has at least
 ‘ half a dozen of them quartered at
 ‘ once upon him!”

‘ I cannot say that I was pleased
 ‘ with any thing which shewed a ten-
 ‘ dency to the manifest destruction of
 ‘ the constitution and liberties of my
 ‘ country; but I thought myself about
 ‘ to be the wife of a soldier, and that
 ‘ it would not become me to make any
 ‘ objection. I only repeat these cir-
 ‘ cumstances to you, to let you see what
 ‘ company I was among.

‘ The night growing pretty far ad-
 ‘ vanced, Willmore began to talk of
 ‘ going home, and desired a coach might
 ‘ be called; but his kind relation told
 ‘ him she could not bear he should think
 ‘ of such a thing; said that, as the girls
 ‘ were abroad, he might lie in their bed
 ‘ without the least trouble to any one
 ‘ in the family; reminding him that it
 ‘ was a long and very ugly way from
 ‘ Hatton Garden to his lodgings at
 ‘ Whitehall, and bid him consider how
 ‘ many desperate fellows lay in wait
 ‘ for the purses, and even the lives, of
 ‘ gentlemen, who expose themselves, as
 ‘ he would do, to their villainous at-
 ‘ tacks. He seemed to laugh at all this;
 ‘ and insisting that a coach should be
 ‘ called, she renewed her remonstrances,
 ‘ and begged of me to second them;
 ‘ which I readily did, having heard
 ‘ such frightful stories of street-rob-
 ‘ beries, that I was in more real terror
 ‘ for him than she affected to be,

‘ I no sooner spoke than he pulled off
 ‘ his sword, and said my commands
 ‘ were not to be disputed; he would
 ‘ stay. “ But, Madam,” continued
 ‘ he, turning to the old lady, “ I am
 ‘ afraid we have kept you up beyond
 ‘ your hour.” — “ I am never weary
 ‘ of good company,” answered she;
 ‘ but for this sweet young lady’s sake,
 ‘ who may want repose after her jour-
 ‘ ney, I think it may be proper for us
 ‘ to retire.” In speaking these words,
 ‘ she rung her bell for a servant to shew
 ‘ Willmore his chamber. She would
 ‘ needs attend me herself into that al-
 ‘ lotted for me, and see me into bed;
 ‘ but whether she did this out of com-
 ‘ plaisance, or a far different motive,
 ‘ you will presently be judge.’

Here the melancholy Sophia stopped
 to take breath; and, as it is very possi-
 ble the reader will be glad to do so too,
 I shall defer giving the catastrophe of
 this adventure till the next chapter.

There is a maxim, which I have al-
 ways thought worthy of being observed
 by every writer, that an old author
 has delivered down to posterity in these
 lines—

‘ Too much of one thing the vex’d mind
 ‘ will cloy;
 ‘ It asks a relaxation—e’en from joy.’

CHAP. XVI.

CONTAINS THE SEQUEL OF SOPHIA’S
 STORY.

‘ **T**HOUGH the old lady,’ re-
 ‘ sumed Sophia, pursuing the
 ‘ thread of her discourse, ‘ shewed a most
 ‘ tender care in tucking the cloaths
 ‘ about me, and drawing close the cur-
 ‘ tains of the bed, I found it impossi-
 ‘ ble, after she was gone, to compose
 ‘ myself to rest. It was not the thoughts
 ‘ of what I was about to do, nor the
 ‘ step I had taken towards it, that kept
 ‘ me waking, for I accused myself not
 ‘ of the least imprudence in that affair,
 ‘ nor once imagined that the condition
 ‘ I was going to enter into would not
 ‘ render me perfectly happy; but it was
 ‘ a strange mixture of ideas, which I
 ‘ then thought nothing to the purpose,
 ‘ and could not account for, but have
 ‘ since ascribed, and ever must ascribe,

‘ to the goodness of my guardian angel, which prevented me from falling into a state which must have deprived me of the power of resisting the worst mischief that could have happened to me.

‘ Finding I could not sleep, the moon shining extremely bright, I got out of bed, and throwing on my wrapping gown, I went to the window, which looked into a pretty large garden; the air was sweet and serene, and the beams of my favourite planet, glittering among the trees and plants, afforded a very delightful prospect, and filled me with solemn contemplations on the beauties of nature, and the bounties for which we are indebted to the Great Author of our being.

‘ How long I should have remained in this pleasing reverie I know not, if I had not been disturbed by fancy; I heard something behind me in the chamber: on turning my head hastily about, in order to convince myself, I saw the figure of a man in a night-gown and cap, but could not distinguish the face, he being in the dark part of the room; I shrieked out. “Hush! hush!” said he, advancing: I then found it was Willmore; and though let’s frightened than before, was equally astonished. “Willmore!” cried I, “what brings you here?”

“I should rather ask,” said he, “what brings you out of bed at this unseasonable hour? Come, come, my dear,” pursued he, going to lay hold on me, “let me replace these tender limbs where they will be exposed to less inconveniences.”—“Stand off,” rejoined I, “and tell me what you mean by this intrusion?”

“Can a man intrude on what is his own?” cried he. “Are you not already mine by love; and will not to-morrow make you so by law? Away, then, with this idle coyness; there should now be no reserve between us; be as wise as you are fair, and generously grant to-night what to-morrow will give me power to seize; leave nothing for the parson but to confirm the gift your inclination has previously bestowed: this is the marriage of the souls, that of the hands is mere matter of form; this alone can assure me of your affec-

tion; and, by consequence, engage the continuance of mine.”

‘ You will perhaps wonder, my dear Miss Jessamy,’ pursued she, ‘that I had patience to listen to so impudent a declaration, and did not rather attempt to put a stop to it, by expressing the just abhorrence and disdain I had of his behaviour; but, indeed, I was so much shocked and confounded, that, I believe, had he run on in the same strain even longer than he did, I should not have had the power to make the least reply.

‘ Misconstruing, I suppose, my silence as a half approbation of what he had been urging, he took me in his arms, kissed, and pressed me to his bosom with the utmost vehemence, though I cannot say with any indecency. I struggled; burst into a flood of tears; but as yet was able to bring out no more than—“Oh, Mr. Willmore! I never could have believed you would talk to me in this manner.”

“I talk to you as a man of reason, as well as a lover,” answered he; “and I would have you behave like a woman who has some share of both. I do not despair, however,” added he, with an affected laugh, “but to find my arguments will have more efficacy with you when we are in bed.”

‘ While he was speaking these words, he made an offer of forcing me from the place where I was standing; and this action it was which first roused me from that stupid lethargy, which amazement at his proceeding had thrown me into. “Base man!” cried I, “unworthy of my least regard! be assured I will rather plunge myself headlong from this window, than be exposed one moment longer to such audacious insults; therefore be gone; leave me this instant, or I will raise the whole family with my shrieks.”

“Mighty well, Madam!” said he, with an air of derision; “it is mighty well! I see the respect you have for me! and now will let you into the secret of my acting in the manner I have done. You must know, that being perfectly acquainted with the sham tenderness with which your sex frequently impose upon us men, I made a resolution never to give up my liberty to any woman, who would

“not

“not convince me of her love, by permitting me to enjoy her before marriage.”

“Monster! villain!” cried I; and was going on, but he prevented me. “No hard names, I beseech you, Madam,” said he; “we men have as much vanity as you women can have, and have as good a right too as yourselves to it; we are as well pleased as you with being loved, and as malicious as you when we find we are not so: you take a pride in triumphing over us, when you fancy you have us in your power; and whenever we have you in ours, we should be asses not to make use of it; you happen to be in mine, and though you do not love me, nor I care twopence for you, I shall not take all this pains for nothing, nor come here to lie alone to-night.”

“In concluding this fine speech, he flew upon me like a lion; and sure it was Providence alone, which, in that dreadful moment, inspired me with an unusual strength and courage: I broke from the hold he had taken on me, and ran screaming into the next room; but that would have availed me little, if, in pursuing me, his feet had not entangled in the carpet, and he fell at full length upon the floor. This gave me an opportunity to pull down the bars of one of the windows, open the shutters, and throw up the sash. The villain’s sword, which he had pulled off on our persuading him to stay all night, lay just at my hand; I drew it, resolving to run it into his heart, if by no other means I could escape the violence he threatened. He soon recovered himself from the accident, and was with me: I stood on my defence with his own weapon pointed against his breast, calling out at the same time, “A rape! thieves! murder! fire!” and every thing that I thought might alarm the neighbourhood. He would fain have come near enough to me to have wrested the sword out of my hand, but I kept it still waving; and I could perceive he was pretty fearful of encountering the point. The noise I made, however, brought the woman of the house up stairs: she came running into the room with a candle in her hand, and affected to be greatly surprized to see

Willmore there, and myself in the posture I was.

“Had I been in any other situation than such as I then was, I must have laughed excessively at the sight of this old beldam, just risen from her bed. Her head was so cased with napkins, that it almost rivalled the size of her enormous belly, which, stripped of the pent-house of her hoop-petticoat, shewed itself in its full magnitude: the flannel bandages about her gouty legs, exposed by the shortness of a little red petticoat, which scarcely reached below her knees, and her bowed-out back, covered only with a thin toilet, which I suppose she had snatched up in the hurry of hearing me call out, rendered her certainly the most grotesque figure that ever eyes beheld.

“Though it was doubtless this wretch’s fears of being exposed, and not any compassion for me, that brought her to my relief, yet it must be owned her coming was very seasonable at this juncture, as my spirits as well as strength must inevitably have failed in a short time, and left me entirely destitute of all defence. “By what vile arts soever I have been decoyed into your house,” said I, as soon as I saw her enter, “I expect to be protected in it; and if I am not so, nothing but your murdering me shall prevent my applying to a magistrate for justice.”

“In spite of the confusion I was in myself, I could perceive she was most terribly alarmed at my words, and the posture in which she found me. “You shall not be murdered, you shall not be hurt,” cried she in a hoarse trembling voice; “no harm shall come to you in my house. But, pray, what has happened to put you into this disorder?”—“Ask that villain there, who calls himself your nephew,” returned I, “and thank him for the ill opinion I have of every thing that is here.”

“On this she took Willmore by the arm, and drew him to a corner of the room, where they talked together for the space of several minutes, but in such low and grumbling accents, that I could hear nothing of what was said, till he raising his voice a little, cried—“It is not that I care a straw
“for

“ for the girl, but I hate to be baulked.” She then spoke something to him very softly, on which he flung from her, and went out of the room, casting a most malicious look at me as he passed by.

“ As soon as he was gone—“ Dear Madam,” said she, approaching me, “ I am afflicted to the last degree that anything should happen to disconcert you in my house: sure the captain was drunk; but all is over now; he is gone up to his own chamber; and I am sure, after what I have said to him, he will not come down again to-night; therefore I beseech you, give me leave to help you into bed; you will certainly get cold in the night air.”

“ I would have thanked her, for, indeed, I thought it best to behave civilly till I had got out of that cursed house, but I had not the power of speaking: the late terror I had been in being now a little subsided, a flood of other mingled passions overwhelmed my heart; I threw myself into a chair, and was ready to faint. Seeing my condition, she ran and fetched a bottle of cordial-water, which I took a little of, and found myself refreshed. All she could say, however, would not persuade me to go into bed: I told her, that the greatest obligation she could confer upon me, was to leave me to myself for the remainder of the night; on which she retired, after giving me, on my desiring it, the keys of the dining-room and bed-chamber doors.

“ When I had secured myself as much as locks could make me, I began to give a loose to emotions, which had they not found a vent in tears, must certainly have burst my heart, and left me dead upon the spot: but I will not prolong my already too tedious narrative with any description of what I suffered; I shall only say, that I continued in a condition little inferior to madness till break of day, without once reflecting that I was almost naked, or of the dangers to which my health was exposed. At last, however, I recovered my senses enough to get on my cloaths, and to think of going from a place which had been the scene of so much horror to me. Hearing the maids were up,

“ I ventured to unfasten my door, and went down into the parlour, where I desired a wench that was sweeping the entry to call a coach for me, which she promised, but I found, instead of doing so, she went up directly to her mistress, and told her my request, for the old beldam immediately came down, and asked me, in her fawning tone, if I would not please to stay breakfast; which I refusing—“ I hope, Madam,” said she, “ you will take nothing amiss from me; I am sorry to the very soul that you should meet with any thing in my house to disoblige you: I do assure you I have rattled the captain soundly about it; he confesses he was in liquor, and will beg your pardon.”

“ I want no submissions from him,” answered I, “ nor will I ever see him more; but you may tell him, that I expect he will send me a bond for the money he borrowed of me.”—“ I am quite a stranger,” cried she, “ to all affairs between you; but I will go up directly, and let him know what you say.” With these words she left me, I suppose with the intent she mentioned.

“ The moment she was gone, a hackney-coach came to the door; two young women, gaily dressed, bolted out of it; I presently knew them by the pictures I had seen above, for those she called her daughters; though indeed their faces had nothing of that innocence which the painter had bestowed upon them; they stared at me as they passed by the parlour-door, but said nothing, and ran singing up stairs: in fine, they had the marks of their profession about them; and the very sight of them would have convinced me, if I had doubted of it before, into what sort of a house the villain Willmore had seduced me.

“ The coach that brought them not being yet gone from the door, I thought best to take this opportunity of going away, without waiting to hear what answer Willmore would give to my message by his pretended aunt: I was just stepping in, when she came down, and told me that the captain was asleep at present, but that, as soon as he awoke, she would not fail to deliver to him what I had said. I replied, that it was no matter, I should

‘ should find other means to send to him, and then bid the coachman drive to Piccadilly.

‘ The fatigue I had sustained the night before, and the hurry of spirits I was still in, rendered me very unfit to be seen by any of my acquaintance; I therefore resolved to go directly home; and as I knew not but the stage might be already set out, or if not so, was equally uncertain of getting a place in it, I hired a chariot at Bullamore’s: I found myself very much indisposed during all this little journey, and on my arrival grew so extremely ill, that I was obliged to be let blood; but this was far from giving me any relief; I fell the next morning into a fever, in which I continued eleven days without hope of recovery.

‘ If the extremest bitterness of heart, if shame and remorse for ever having loved a man so unworthy of it, if rage and disdain at the insults I had received, were capable of killing, I could not have survived; yet so it was, my distemper left me at the expiration of the time I mentioned, and I regained my health, though, indeed, by very slow degrees, for it was near a month before I was able to quit my chamber.

‘ In all this time I received no bond, nor even letter from Willmore; therefore, as soon as I was fit to see company, I sent for a lawyer, who was a friend of my brother’s, and when he was at home had often visited at our house. I told him my unhappy story, as far as relates to the money I had lent, and desired he would commence a prosecution against Willmore on that account: but when he found that I had neither bond, promissory note, nor other obligation under his own hand-writing, nor even any one witness of the loan, he assured me at once, that if the gentleman had not honour enough to pay the debt, I must infallibly lose it, for law could give me no relief. Perceiving I was extremely shocked at what he said, he told me, that if I would make a demand of the money in writing, he would carry it to him, and hear what answer he would make to it. Though it was death to me to set pen to paper to such a villain, my unwillingness that he should run

‘ away with almost half my fortune, made me comply with this proposal, and I wrote to him, as near as I can remember, in these terms.

“ TO CAPTAIN GEORGE WILL-
“ MORE.

“ SIR,

“ I Have employed this gentleman to “ take such security as he shall “ think sufficient from you, for a “ thousand pounds lent you by me on “ the fourth day of last month; or, on “ your refusing to give it, to pursue “ such methods as the law provides to “ compel you to do justice to the ill- “ treated

“ SOPHIA ***.”

‘ The lawyer approved of what I wrote, said he would argue with Willmore upon it, and as soon as he had done so, wait on me again with the result of their conversation.

‘ As he had told me, and I myself had always believed, that the recovery of my money depended wholly on the honour of the person to whom I had lent it, you may suppose I could not flatter myself with the least hopes of success; so was not disappointed, when, at the end of ten days, my lawyer returned and gave an account, that the monster Willmore had utterly denied the whole affair, and treated both me and my demand with the greatest contempt.

“ I am very much surprized, Madam,” said this gentleman to me, “ that you should venture so large a sum of money in the hands of any one without an acknowledgment of the receipt in some shape or other, “ much more in those of a person such as Captain Willmore; for to deal “ plainly with you, I have enquired “ into his character, and find he is one “ of those sparks who are distinguished “ by the name of Bucks, a species of “ the creation who are scarce worthy “ of the name of men, yet would fain “ be thought heroes; fellows that run “ about the streets with great clubs in “ their hands, and swords by their sides “ as long as themselves, frightening wo- “ men and children, and affecting to “ be ridiculously terrible.”

‘ I was a little piqued at this description of a man who had once ap-

‘ feared

‘peared but too agreeable to me: I said nothing, however; but since it was so, I must be content to lose my money. I was willing, notwithstanding, to make some farther enquiry what could be done; and accordingly, as soon as he was gone, came to London, where I had the advice of three several counsel; but they all agreeing in what the first had told me, I was convinced that all attempts to do myself justice would be in vain, and only serve to expose me to the ridicule of the world.

‘England now grew hateful to me, and I took a resolution to leave it, and throw myself into a new scene of life. A young lady of my acquaintance being lately gone to a convent at Brussels, I wrote to her, desiring she would make an agreement for me with the superior, which she having done very much to my satisfaction, I discharged the servants in the country, gave up the house to my brother’s friend, and have now nothing to do but to depart.

‘In the midst of all these embarrassments,’ continued she, ‘I did not forget my dear Miss Jessamy: I was twice to wait on you, but was informed you was at Bath; and not expecting your return till the end of the season, I despaired of the satisfaction I have now enjoyed, both in seeing you, and in disburdening myself of that load of afflictions with which I have been oppressed since last I had the pleasure of your company.’

C H A P. XVII.

IN WHICH THE READER IS NOT TO EXPECT ANY EXTRAORDINARY MATTERS.

SOPHIA could not put a period to her recital without letting fall some tears. Jenny, who was all good-nature, though she did not approve of her conduct in some parts of it, said many obliging things for her consolation; and after expressing her detestation of the almost unexampled baseness and ingratitude of Willmore, told her, among other things, that though she was extremely sorry to be deprived of her conversation, she could not but highly ap-

plaud the resolution she had taken of retiring into a monastery, as change of place, and a way of living so entirely new to her, might, by degrees, wear out the remembrance of whatever had been disagreeable to her in the past.

‘Besides,’ said the amiable lady with a smile, ‘you will, perhaps, hear of many adventures parallel to your own among the holy sisterhood; for I have been told, and am apt to think with some truth, that the convents are greatly indebted, for being crowded as they are, to the inconstancy and ingratitude of the other sex.’

The other agreeing with her in this point, they were beginning to enter into a discourse concerning the swift transition which sometimes happens from the flesh to the spirit, from an enthusiasm in love to an enthusiasm in devotion; when Sophia on a sudden recollecting herself, cried out—‘But, my dear Miss Jessamy, I have been so engrossed by my own affairs, that I forgot till now to enquire into yours: I flatter myself, however, that you have no reason to complain of woes you so well know how to pity in another.’—‘Indeed,’ replied Jenny, ‘I have had my share of anxieties too, though of a nature far different from yours;’ and then repeated to her the whole story of that confusion, which both herself and Jemmy had been involved in, through the report raised by Bellpine, as also the consequences which had attended the discovery of his baseness.

They continued talking together upon this subject till Sophia thought it a proper time to retire; but Jenny would not suffer her to go till she had given her a promise to see her again before she left the kingdom.

Her unhappy adventure had made a very great impression on the mind of our young heroine. She sincerely loved her, and pitied her misfortune; but could not help thinking it both strange and blameable in her to entertain so violent a passion for a man whose character she knew so little of: ‘People make their own unhappiness, and then lament it,’ cried she, somewhat peevishly; ‘sure I never could have been so indiscreet.’ But this thought no sooner came into her head than it was checked by another. ‘Yet how vain am I to flatter myself with such an imagination,

‘ imagination, or presume so far on my own strength of reason; as the poet truly says—

“ When things go ill, each fool presumes to
“ advise,

“ And, if more happy, thinks himself more
“ wife.”

‘ How can I be certain,’ pursued she, ‘ that in the same circumstances I should not have acted in the same manner that poor Sophia has done? I have been defended from the misfortune that has befallen her; first, by my father’s care in training me up to love where interest and convenience would accompany my passion, and afterwards by the well-proved fidelity of the man ordained for me: had I been left to my own choice, who knows what might have happened? I remember to have read a passage somewhere, which may remind the fortunate part of the world, that they ought not to think they are so through their own merits, but the prevalence of their better stars.

“ When prosperous gales life’s vessel smooth-
“ ly glides,

“ And on the smiling waves triumphant
“ rides;

“ But when rough storms from adverse quar-
“ ters roar,

“ How difficult to gain the wish’d-for shore!”

Thus did the knowledge of her friend’s mistake, instead of making her set any value upon herself for not having been guilty of the like error, serve only to fill her with the warmest gratitude to Heaven, that had not exposed her to the like danger. Happy would it be, both for themselves and others, if all those ladies who know themselves free from the weakness incident to some others of their sex, were of Jenny’s way of thinking: but I shall say no more upon this head; the reader must have sufficiently observed, through all her actions, the sweetness and candour of her disposition; therefore, according to the words of the inspired writer—

‘ Let her own works praise her in the gates.’

She was every day expecting her un-

fortunate friend to make her a second visit to take leave, when she received one from another person, on the same ceremony, which, though she thought she had no manner of concern in at that time, proved afterwards matter of much satisfaction to her.

Sir Robert Manley had a sudden call to Paris, on account of the death of an uncle, who, disliking the times, had retired some time ago, carrying with him all his effects, which were very considerable. It was this gentleman, though his business required haste, that could not think of leaving the kingdom without first waiting on Jenny, to know if she had any commands in his power to execute at the place he was going to. She thanked him in the most obliging terms, but told him she had no affairs in Paris, nor did not know of any acquaintance she had at present in all France, except Mr. Jessamy, who was no farther than Calais. ‘ I shall pass through Calais, Madam,’ answered he; ‘ perhaps stay a night or two there. I shall, doubtless, see Mr. Jessamy; at least it will be in my power so to do, if you permit me to acquaint him that I have the honour to be known to you, and to carry to him the joyful news of your being in good health.’

Though she had the highest esteem for this gentleman, on account of his many amiable qualities, as well as for his birth, fortune, and accomplishments, yet always keeping in mind the declaration he had once made of a passion for her, she maintained a greater reserve towards him than to any other of her acquaintance; and now only replied coldly, that if chance should bring them together, Mr. Jessamy would certainly think himself honoured in the company of a gentleman of his character.

As he was to take post for Dover the next morning, and had many friends to see before his departure, the visit he made her was very short; but he had not been gone an hour before Jenny found she had need of his service at Calais, and began a little to repent she had received the offer he had made her with so much indifference; a letter was brought her from Jimmy, containing these lines.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY.

‘ DEAREST AND ONLY DEAR,

‘ **N**OTHING but your commands
 ‘ could have kept me here, after
 ‘ what Mr. Morgan has wrote to me;
 ‘ instead of this you would now have
 ‘ seen me at your feet. Oh, Jenny!
 ‘ tender, generous soul! but I will not
 ‘ wound your delicacy either with
 ‘ thanks or praises; indeed, all the tri-
 ‘ bute I could pay of both would be
 ‘ too mean for the occasion.

‘ You desire to know in what man-
 ‘ ner I pass my time while banished
 ‘ from you, and I will give you an
 ‘ exact account: your ideas of my sea-
 ‘ coast promenades are just; but for the
 ‘ rest I am not quite so unhappy as your
 ‘ fancy represents. They say Calais
 ‘ is the sink of France; but if it is,
 ‘ what must be the garden? The streets,
 ‘ indeed, are, for the most part, nar-
 ‘ row and ill paved; but there is a
 ‘ square, called La Place, spacious,
 ‘ airy, and very commodious for walk-
 ‘ ing; and the ramparts afford as de-
 ‘ lectable a prospect as imagination
 ‘ can well figure out: then the air is so
 ‘ serene and pure, the water good, the
 ‘ wine excellent, and the inhabitants,
 ‘ even to the lowest degree of the peo-
 ‘ ple, extremely polite; an instance of
 ‘ which I experienced a few nights
 ‘ past, and must acquaint you with it.

‘ Having seen all that is worthy of
 ‘ observation in the town, curiosity led
 ‘ me to pass the gates, which I had no
 ‘ sooner done than I found myself at
 ‘ the entrance of three great roads;
 ‘ that before me, as I have since been
 ‘ been informed, is the highway to Pa-
 ‘ ris; that on the right-hand, to St.
 ‘ Omer’s; and on the left to Boulogne:
 ‘ the good order in which they are kept,
 ‘ and two triangles of beautiful fields,
 ‘ which separate the one from the other,
 ‘ took my eye extremely. The even-
 ‘ ing was very pleasant, every thing
 ‘ about me indulged contemplation,
 ‘ and I wandered on to a considerable
 ‘ distance, when a soldier came run-
 ‘ ning almost breathless after me; and
 ‘ being obliged to stop and turn about
 ‘ by his repeated calling to me, he ac-
 ‘ costed me with a very low bow, and
 ‘ told me, that perceiving I was a
 ‘ stranger, he thought it his duty to ac-
 ‘ quaint me, that the gates were al-
 ‘ ways shut at eight o’clock, and the

‘ keys carried to the governor; that
 ‘ it was very near that hour, and, if I
 ‘ did not immediately return, I should
 ‘ find it very difficult, if not impossible,
 ‘ to re-enter the town. On this I
 ‘ mended my pace, according to his
 ‘ advice; but, though I went as fast as
 ‘ I could, came but just time enough
 ‘ to get over the first draw-bridge,
 ‘ which they were preparing to take
 ‘ up. I now saw the danger I had es-
 ‘ caped, thanked the honest soldier for
 ‘ his intelligence, and offered him a
 ‘ piece of money; on which he drew
 ‘ back, and surprized me with this an-
 ‘ swer—“No, Sir!” answered he; “the
 ‘ honour of serving you is a sufficient
 ‘ recompence; we soldiers never take
 ‘ money but from the king our ma-
 ‘ ster.” Judge, my dear Jenny, of the
 ‘ courtesy of the French nation in ge-
 ‘ neral, by the sample I have given you
 ‘ of it in this soldier.

‘ I will not, however, so far deceive
 ‘ either myself or you, as not both to
 ‘ think and say, that, if I were to con-
 ‘ tinue here for any length of time, I
 ‘ should be very much at a loss for
 ‘ company, the town consisting chiefly
 ‘ of trading people, who are entirely
 ‘ taken up with their several avocations;
 ‘ so that, excepting the officers of the
 ‘ army, and some few friars, there is
 ‘ little conversation suitable to the taste
 ‘ of an Englishman.

‘ I was yesterday at St. Omer’s, to
 ‘ take a view of that famous seminary
 ‘ of Jesuits, which has given to the
 ‘ world so many prime-ministers, bi-
 ‘ shops, cardinals, and popes; but, as
 ‘ I staid but a few hours there, I saw
 ‘ scarce any thing of the place, except
 ‘ the college, which is, indeed, a very
 ‘ fine one; and I only tell you this to
 ‘ shew you that I neglect no opportu-
 ‘ nity of amusing myself.

‘ I also intend to make a visit to
 ‘ Boulogne to-morrow, as I am told
 ‘ there are several English gentlemen
 ‘ there at present, for some of whom I
 ‘ have a particular regard. I may, per-
 ‘ haps, stay two or three days; but, if
 ‘ I should transgress the time of the
 ‘ mail coming in, shall leave orders
 ‘ for letters with my direction to be
 ‘ sent after me. I would not be de-
 ‘ prived one moment of the pleasure of
 ‘ hearing from you for all the enjoy-
 ‘ ments the world can give; for know,
 ‘ my dear Jenny, it is not the park, the
 ‘ plays,

‘ plays, the operas, the assemblies, nor the company at White’s, but it is your dear society I languish for, and which, I trust to Heaven, I shall soon be blessed with; till when, call every soft idea of love and tenderness to your imagination, and let them tell you how much I am, beyond what words can speak, my dear, dear Jenny, your most passionate admirer, and and eternally devoted lover and servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.’

‘ P. S. I remember you have a little picture, which was drawn for you some years ago, and came as near the life as any thing of art can do: it would be a very great pleasure to me if you could contrive a way to send it to me, without much trouble to yourself; for though, as you may be certain, your image is indelibly fixed upon my heart, I should be glad, methinks, to feast my eyes, as well as mind, with your dear resemblance.’

Jenny was now heartily sorry this letter had not arrived before Sir Robert Manley took his leave, as she might have engaged him to be the bearer of the picture of Jemmy requested of her. She resolved, however, rather than not comply with the desire of a person so dear to her, to take the liberty of sending to that gentleman, and entreating the favour of speaking with him, if possible, before he set out on his journey.

Sir Robert was not at home when the servant went, nor received the message that had been left for him till it was too late to wait on her that night; but would not go out of town without obeying her summons, and came pretty early the next morning.

Jenny could not repeat, without blushing, the motive which had induced her to send for him; but, after having said all, and, indeed, much more than was necessary, to apologize for what she had done—‘ Madam,’ answered he, ‘ I know not how to thank, as it deserves, the confidence you repose in me; but you must own that, in doing me this favour, you put my honour to the severest trial. How are you

‘ sure that a trust, such as your picture, may not tempt me to be base?’

‘ I will venture that,’ said she, gaily; ‘ and should be glad to be quite as sure you will pardon the trouble I give you on this occasion.’ On this Sir Robert said many gallant things; but concluded with a promise of delivering his charge safe into the hands of the happy person for whom it was intended; and took his leave, as time pressed him to depart, and his chaise and servants had all this while waited for him at the door.

C H A P. XVIII.

CONTAINS NONE OF THOSE BEAUTIFUL DIGRESSIONS, THOSE REMARKS OR REFLECTIONS, WHICH A CERTAIN WOULD-BE-CRITICK PRÉTENDS ARE SO MUCH DISTINGUISHED IN THE WRITINGS OF HIS TWO FAVOURITE AUTHORS; YET, IT IS TO BE HOPED, WILL AFFORD SUFFICIENT TO PLEASE ALL THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO BE PLEASED.

THE smallest trifle, if requested by a friend, is a business of importance to the truly tender and sincere. Jenny was as much pleased with having found an opportunity of sending her picture to Jemmy, as some ladies would be with being presented themselves with one set round with diamonds. She contented not herself, however, with having obliged him in this particular; she knew he would also expect an immediate answer to his letter; and accordingly, that same evening, wrote to him in the following terms.

‘ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

‘ MY DEAR JEMMY,

‘ I Rejoice to hear that Calais is less irksome to you than, by the description which has been given me of sea-port towns, I feared it was. You could not oblige me more than in telling me that you endeavour to make it as agreeable as possible, and that you support this banishment with some tolerable degree of patience.

‘ Would to Heaven it were any way consistent with the affection I have

‘ for you to invite you home! But all the accounts our friends as yet have been able to get in relation to Bellpine’s condition, are so very dubious and imperfect, that, till we are more assured, I dare not even indulge a wish of seeing you here. Perplexing circumstance! that compels me to be thus anxious for the welfare of a villain, who has attempted to destroy my peace, and that of him whose happiness I prize above my own.

‘ As you desire to have my picture, I have entreated the favour of Sir Robert Manley to deliver it to you as he passes through Calais in his way to Paris: he has the character of a person of great sense and honour; and, I believe, deserves it. He talks of staying a day or two in the place where you are; and, if so, I am apt to think his conversation, while thus destitute of company, will be at least equally agreeable as the little token that introduces him to your acquaintance.

‘ I have seen so few people since you went away, that I have nothing to relate worthy your attention, except what you know already, that I am, with the most tender affection, dear
Jemmy, yours entirely, and for ever,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. I will not ask your picture in return, because I know not whether the place you are in affords any artists of that kind; and, besides, flatter myself that Fate will order it so, that you will not be obliged to continue there long enough to have it drawn.’

Had Jenny deferred this letter till the next day, it is certain she would have wrote in a different manner. Pretty early in the morning Mr. Morgan came, and brought her the joyful news that Bellpine had been seen walking about his chamber, and looking through the window.

Mr. Lovegrove also made her a visit the same day, and confirmed what the old gentleman had said; as did several others of her friends, who had been industrious in sifting out the truth of an affair which they knew was of so much consequence to her peace.

Two or three days put the veracity of this intelligence beyond all dispute. The surgeon, who had all this time attended Bellpine, no longer denied but that his patient was out of danger from his wound; and the people of the house confessed to those who enquired into the matter that he had quitted his bed, and it was expected would soon go abroad for the air.

Jenny, who was fully informed of every thing that passed on this occasion, was beginning to entertain the most pleasing ideas of seeing her dear Jemmy within a very short space of time, and waited for a letter from him with less patience than ever she had done before, as the answer she should send him to it would be accompanied with an assurance, that all the apprehensions his friends had for him were removed, and he might now return with safety.

She figured to herself the ecstasy with which her lover would receive this information; the haste he would make to obey the welcome summons; and the mutual joy of their happy meeting. Thus was she amused, as Shakespeare elegantly expresses it—

‘ Lull’d in the day-dreams of a mind in love.’

But when the wished-for letter arrived, she found the delightful prospect she had formed was, for the present, quite obscured, as the reader will see in these lines.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY.

‘ MY SOUL’S TREASURE,

‘ YOU have not only given me the resemblance of your angelick self, but, at the same time, given me a friend, for whom, next to that, I ought to bless and thank you. Your will, doubtless, wonder how I am become so well acquainted with the virtues of Sir Robert Manley in the short time we have been together. I will tell you, then: he has made me the confidante of the passion he had for you; your behaviour on his declaring it; and the noble conquest he gained over himself, when you so generously avowed your fidelity to me, and dependance on mine to you.

‘ But, oh, my Jenny! how could I curse that dog Bellpine! How could
‘ I repeat,

‘ I repeat, a thousand and a thousand times, the blow I have given him, when I look back upon that scene of wretchedness into which I might have been inevitably plunged by his base arts! Your ears continually filled with reports of my perfidiousness and ingratitude; a rival of such dangerous merit, encouraged by them to make his addresses to you: what must have become of me, if the most unparalleled constancy on your side, and the strictest adherence to justice and honour on his, had not secured my hopes? But, thanks to both, the storm is overblown; the danger is past; and I should give up all myself to joy, and forgive the wretch whose vile attempts to ruin me have the more confirmed my happiness.

‘ And now, my dearest, I am to inform you, that to-morrow I remove myself farther from you. My new friend tells me that I might have seen Paris, all the royal palaces, and every thing deserving observation, in the time I have been here; and is surprised that I did not take this opportunity of going to a place which affords so much to excite the curiosity of a stranger: in short, he has seduced me to accompany him. I would not have you think, however, that I yielded to his persuasions but in the assurance he gave me, that he had often heard you lament the solitude of my condition, and wish me in a more agreeable situation.

‘ Though I dare take his word, yet I should be glad of receiving a farther confirmation from yourself: a line from your dear hand will be a joyful welcome to me on my arrival at that great city to which I am going. I know you too well to doubt of your kind compliance with this request, as it is the only thing which can enable me to relish any amusements that may present themselves to me.

‘ Our worthy friend, who is willing to contribute all he can to my satisfaction, writes this night to Mr. Waters, a banker in Paris, to desire, if any letters directed to me are left at his house, they shall be taken care of. Farewell! Believe that, wherever I am, my heart is always with you; and that I never can be other than, with inviolable love and truth,

‘ my dear Jenny, your most passionately, and most tenderly, devoted lover and servant,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. Sir Robert lays a strict injunction upon me to engage your pardon for the tales he has told me, and to make his compliments and best wishes acceptable to you.’

How would some ladies have swelled at this disappointment! I believe I know those who would have thrown the letter from them with the utmost disdain; perhaps tore it, and cried out—‘ How dare the fellow use me thus? He ought to have asked me leave before he went away! He does not deserve that I should ever see him more!’ and a thousand such like reproaches: but the reader has seen too much of Jenny to expect this sort of behaviour in her. At first, indeed, it gave a little check to her late flow of spirits, to find her lover was every way going farther from her, at a time when she had hoped he would be approaching towards her: but she soon recovered herself; and, on well weighing the motives that induced him to leave Calais, found she had more reason to approve than to condemn him for it.

Though, in his letters to her, he had dissembled his chagrin, for fear she should be too much affected with it, yet she was sensible that, for a man of his gay temper, to be so long pent up in such a place as Calais, could not but be very irksome to him; and, as he yet was ignorant of the hopes his friends had of his returning soon to England, neither wondered at, nor was angry, that he so readily embraced Sir Robert Manley’s proposal of passing the time of his absence in a manner so much more capable of improving his mind, as well as of gratifying his senses.

This was the way in which she argued with herself in defence of her lover’s proceedings; and, upon the whole, was not sorry to be deprived of his company for a while longer, as he was gone to view the magnificence of a place so famous throughout Europe, and so much the mode for all young persons of condition to be acquainted with.

C H A P. XIX.

WHICH, THE AUTHOR THINKS IT HIGHLY PROPER TO ACQUAINT THE PUBLICK, IS MUCH OF A PIECE WITH THE FOREGOING; SO THAT EVERY ONE MAY BE AT LIBERTY EITHER TO READ OR NOT, ACCORDING TO THE SATISFACTION THE OTHER AFFORDED.

JENNY had lived almost as retired as a woman in the first month of her widowhood, ever since Jemmy had been obliged to fly the kingdom on the wound he had given Bellpine; but now, finding he was out of danger, either of life or liberty, on that score, by the recovery of his antagonist, and also that he was gone to regale himself in a place so abounding with all sorts of pleasures, she began to resume her former cheerfulness and vivacity, appeared in all publick places as she had been accustomed, and returned all the visits that were made to her.

Her intimacy with Lady Speck and Miss Wingman was very much increased since she had been at Bath with them, by the participation they had in her secrets, and she in theirs: as those ladies were continually entertained by their lovers with all manner of diversions, she was never left out in any of them, except by her own choice.

Though no one was fonder of all innocent pleasures, and was less reserved and unconstrained in conversation, yet she did not suffer the gaieties of life to interfere with her more serious reflections; the duties of love and friendship, next to those of Heaven, were always her peculiar care, and she never neglected the discharge of them on any pretence whatever. It cannot be supposed that she omitted the gratification of her dear Jemmy's request; she calculated, as well as she was able, from the accounts that had been given her of the route to Paris, on what day he would be there, and sent a letter to meet him on his arrival. The contents of what she wrote to him were these.

‘ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

‘ MY DEAR JEMMY,

‘ I Hope this will find you in good health and spirits, after the fatigue of your long journey. I am so

‘ well pleased with your having taken it, that I should extremely condemn myself for not having advised you to it sooner, if what I confess was owing to my want of thought had not proved for the best, by occasioning you to go into such good company.

‘ I am told that Bellpine is judged to be out of danger; but that is now a matter of no moment. Whatever may be wrote to you on that head, remember, that as I may never see Paris myself, I shall expect from you a very exact account of all the curiosities the place affords: therefore, if you would oblige me, you must not think of coming home till you are well assured that you can have left nothing behind you unobserved. Good night; repose, at present, must be more beneficial to you than any thing I could say, which would all amount to no more than a repetition of my being, with the most unfeigned affection, my dear Jemmy, as much yours at this distance as when nearer,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. Pray let Sir Robert know I think of him with the most just respect.’

Though this letter was somewhat shorter than those she usually wrote to him, yet the few lines it contained discovered, without her designing to do so, such a well established fund of tenderness in her soul, as cannot but be discernible to every understanding reader.

She was entirely eased of all her apprehensions for him on the score of the wound he had given Bellpine, and doubtless wished as ardently to see him again as the most violent of her sex could have done; but there was a certain delicacy in her passion, which rendered every thing that gave him pleasure an adequate satisfaction to herself, nor could she ever have been truly happy without knowing he was so. Besides, she considered, that for him to leave such a place as Paris immediately, and without being able, at his return, to give any description of the royal palaces, colleges, convents, and other things she had heard much talk of, must infallibly expose him to the railery of all his acquaintance: she knew that they would say it was for her sake he did so; that they would call him a romantick lover;

lover; tell him that he was so much the devotee of Cupid, that he could not support the least absence from his mistress, with such like stuff; and would have chose he should even love her less, rather than he should give any proofs of love which might call in question his good sense.

How easy, how contented, must be the man who has a mistress of this way of thinking! and how happy is it also for herself, as it is the almost certain means of securing the lasting esteem, as well as affection, of the man she loves! Jemmy, at least, was a proof of the truth of this observation; the gay and sprightly manner in which he answered his dear Jenny's epistle, shewed he was highly pleased with the injunctions she laid upon him in it. These were his words.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY.

‘ DEAREST JENNY,

‘ I Received yours two hours after my arrival; I need not tell you with what pleasure: but because I have no words to thank the kindness of it as I ought, nor any thing more material to fill up my letter, I shall give you a brief recital of our journey, in which we met with something droll enough to make you laugh, if I do not spoil it in the description.

‘ We had not been long in the first inn we baited at, when the drawer told us there was an English gentleman in the house, who hearing we were his countrymen, begged leave to join us. This we readily granted, flattering ourselves that the evening would pass more agreeably by the addition of a third person in company. A young spark was presently ushered in, dressed fitter for the drawing-room than the road. After the first compliments were over, he cried out in a very theatrick tone—

“ Thro’ Purgatory first to pass,
“ And then arrive at Heaven’s high mass.”

‘ We stared at him, but he immediately explained himself, and told us, in plain prose, that after the purgatory of an odious sea-sickness, and the villainous jolt of a post chaise, he had at last attained the heaven of being admitted into the company of per-

sons whom he knew, by their equipage, must be men of good-sense and taste.

‘ We found him very communicative; he had not been half an hour before he gave us the history of his life; but so larded with scraps of poetry and tags of plays, that it was not altogether intelligible; we picked out enough, however, to know that he had been intended for the law; but that, not liking the business, nor indeed any business, he had left his master before he had served out half his clerkship; and unexpectedly coming into the possession of an estate, by the death of a relation, he applied himself to the study of the belles lettres, meaning poetry, in which he imagined himself a great proficient. He told us that he had read every thing worth reading in English, and was now come to France to perfect himself in that language, for the better understanding of Racine, Crebillon, and some other authors, whom he had heard much talked of.

‘ I have known some men, who either having no genius of their own, or are too indolent not to exert it, have thus set up both for wits and criticks upon the shoulders of others; but I never found one so strongly possessed with this poetical phrenzy as the fellow I am talking of.

‘ Sir Robert, in a sarcastical humour, wrote his character extempore in these lines, which I find no fault with, but that they are not half severe enough.

“ Sure he was born when nature was in chime!
“ Whate’er you say, he answers still in rhyme;

“ Knows all the bards—from Shake-
“ speare’s lofty flow,
“ Down to the jingle of time-serving Rowe,
“ And Fielding’s Rosamond in puppet-
“ flow; }

“ Has all fam’d Laureat Colley’s odes by heart;
“ Can point out what is dull, and what is
“ smart;

“ Erects himself a wit on their foundation,
“ And proves his argument from sound quo-
“ tation;

“ Memory supplies judgment and fancy’s
“ want;

“ You miss not these, while that’s predomi-
“ nant.”

‘ In fine, my dear Jenny, there never was a more egregious coxcomb: but the poor creature was diverting, and
‘ complaisant

‘complaisant to such an excess, that it was not in our power to affront him. We had him with us quire up to Paris; and, perhaps, should not have got rid of him here very easily, if it had not come into Sir Robert’s head to recommend him to a coffee-house, where, he told him, he would find a great many *petits-maitres*, much of his own turn of mind.

‘This is the only adventure that happened to us on the road, except an instance of puritanical hypocrisy, which may serve to strengthen that contempt I know you already have for those pretended zealots. Happening to stop at a cabaret on the road for some refreshment, another post-chaise came to the door at the same time, out of which alighted one of the most noted and most impudent courtizans that ever strolled in St. James’s Park. She was handed out by a person in laced cloaths, bag-wig, feather in his hat, and a long sword by his side; but the conventicle leer distinguished him through this disguise, and I presently knew him for a wealthy citizen of London, a strong Presbyterian, and who passes for a saint among his congregation. As I had some little acquaintance with him, having once bought some things of him, I stepped towards him, called him by his name, and told him I was surprized to see him in France. Never was poor mortal so confused, so shocked: at first, I believe, he would have denied he was the person; but not having courage, he begged I would not expose him, by telling any body where, or in what company, I had seen him. I promised I would not, and left him; but still so disconcerted, that I dare say it would be some time before he could recover himself to be good company with his mistress.

‘I leave you to laugh; for whatever tender things I have to say to you must be deferred till another opportunity, and paper affording room for no more, than that I am, eternally, truly, and passionately, my soul’s best joy, your most devoted friend, lover, and servant,

‘J. JESSAMY.’

The satisfaction Jenny felt in reading this letter, as indeed in all others

she received from the same hand, need not be told to those who have faithful and affectionate hearts; and to those of rougher natures would be but impertinent; I shall therefore say no more on this head, but pass on to matters of a very different kind.

CHAP. XX.

MAKES A SHORT PAUSE IN THE HISTORY, IN ORDER TO PRESENT THE READER WITH THE DETAIL OF A MATRIMONIAL CONTEST ON A PRETTY PARTICULAR OCCASION.

A Very celebrated French author tells us, in his treatise on the human mind, that what we commonly call humour, is no more than nature in odd circumstances. ‘Humour,’ says he, ‘is made up of three qualities; an ambition of appearing peculiar; a strong attachment to some one trifle, and an obstinate perseverance in whatever it inclines to: all these three, he still goes on, are in nature; but then it is in nature perverted, unregulated by reason, and consequently in odd circumstances.’

How far he is right in this definition, I dare not take upon me to determine; but it is certain, that one daily sees a great many people whose characters and manners cannot otherwise be very easily accounted for.

When any two of these humourists meet together in company, and some subject happen to be started, in which they differ in opinion, how farcical would be the dispute with them, if not liable to be attended with worse mischiefs than mutual altercations; both of them vehemently tenacious of what he imagines is right, and equally impatient of contradiction; they foam, they fret, they rail, affect to despise each; and frequently from such beginnings the most lasting animosities arise; though, perhaps, the thing in question is a mere bagatelle; or, if not so, of no more consequence to either of them than what is doing in the farthest parts of Ethiopia, or the deserts of Arabia.

But how much soever we may laugh at such idle quarrels between persons who are strangers, or only casually acquainted with each other, it must afford

a very

a very melancholy reflection, when we see the same effects on those who are most near, either by blood or alliance.

Of all ties, that of marriage requires the strictest unanimity; yet how many do we find, who, merely for the gratification of some ridiculous caprice of their own, endeavour to render miserable the person whom, by all laws, both human and divine, they are bound to make it their study to oblige; and turn that state which should be all love and harmony, into one of discord and confusion!

The people with whom Jenny lived were of this unhappy class. They had little to discompose them, except the perverseness of their own humours; but this indulged was sufficient to involve them in greater inquietudes than fortune could otherwise have inflicted on them. Without the least understanding in political affairs, they took it into their heads to attach themselves to different parties, not through principle or interest, but merely because they had a mind to do so. This opposition of humour, for it could not be called sentiment, occasioned perpetual jars between them, in which they were sometimes so loud and disturbing, that Jenny had more than once threatened to quit their house; and it was, perhaps, the fear of losing so beneficial a boarder that kept them within any tolerable bounds.

It is very strange, and would be incredible, if daily experience did not evince the truth, that people of a genteel education, naturally complaisant, and of a social disposition in other things, should suffer themselves to be so much influenced by some one favourite humour, as to throw off all love, all good manners, all decency, and act like the most rude unpolished creatures in the universe. Yet thus it sometimes proves: neither the husband nor the wife I am speaking of were ignorant how to behave themselves agreeably to the world and to each other; but unfortunately happening to be of a different way of thinking in one particular point, their passions got the better of all other considerations, and both of them seemed divested of reason, and equally even of common civility, as will be seen in the instance I am going to relate.

The wife was now lying-in of a first child, which happened to prove a daughter. Jenny, who had promised to be

one of the sponsors at the font, frequently stepped into the room to enquire after the health of the new-made mother and her infant. As she was going on this good-natured and charitable errand, she heard the husband's voice exceeding loud, and found they were at very high words; but this did not hinder her entering, not doubting but her presence would allay the storm, as it had done many times before.

But this couple were at this time raised to a pitch too high to be easily quelled. 'A man,' cried he, 'had better be buried alive than be married to a fool, an idiot!'—'And a woman,' retorted she with equal bitterness, 'had better be in her grave, than married to a man who, without the least share of reason, fancies he has more than any body else.'—'Fye!' said Jenny, 'is this a time for quarrelling, when one should expect to see only mutual endearments? Pray, what has occasioned this dissention? Some trifle, I will lay my life.'—'No, Madam,' answered he, 'it is no trifle, I assure you; but the most serious thing that can be. Would you believe it, Miss Jessamy,' continued he, pointing to his wife, 'that unnatural mother there, would make me hate the infant she has brought into the world?'—'Regard not what he says, Miss Jessamy,' cried she; 'let him not lay the blame of his own venomous heart on me; for he may be assured, that if he has his will, I would see the little creature, dear as it now is to me, sprawling, dying at my feet, rather than act a mother's part.'—'And if your peevish obstinacy prevails,' rejoined he, 'it never shall know me for a father; shall never share my blessing or my substance.'

'Bless me,' says Jenny, 'what horrid menaces are these to the poor helpless innocent! But still I am in the dark as to the meaning.' Both the husband and the wife had their mouths open at the same time to make answer to this demand; but the weak condition of the woman having taken away some part of her usual volubility, he had the advantage of speaking first. 'The dispute between us, Madam,' said he, 'is concerning the name by which the child shall be baptized: I am desirous it should be Charlotte; and she, in downright opposition to

‘ me, will needs have it called Wilhelmina.’ — ‘ Oh, heavens!’ cried Jenny, with a sort of a scornful smile, ‘ is all this contention about a name?’ — ‘ A name, Madam!’ resumed he eagerly; ‘ a name is not so trifling a thing as you seem to think: I am an Englishman, Madam; I love my country, and will have no foreign names in my family.’ — ‘ It is a small mark of your loving your country,’ bawled she as loud as she was able, ‘ when your child is to have a horrid, popish, Jacobite name: but she shall never be made a christian on such terms; I had a thousand times rather see her an atheist, an infidel, or any thing, than an odious Jacobite.’

‘ Both of you are certainly mad,’ said Jenny, ‘ and put constructions upon things, which no people in the world, except yourselves, would ever think of; as if the name of a person were the symbol of a party: but, even if it were so, how can Charlotte be accounted popish? or Wilhelmina outlandish? the one, as I take it, being the feminine of Charles, and the other of William, which are both English, and also good Protestant names.’ — ‘ Your derivation, Madam, is extremely right as to the one,’ replied the husband; ‘ but not as to the other. Charlotta is, indeed, the feminine of Charles; but, in our language, the feminine of William would be Willamina, or Willamana, not Wilhelmina; that “hel” in the middle shews it is not of English extraction.’

Jenny laughed heartily at this definition, though she could not but allow it to be just: on which the wife said, somewhat sullenly, that she did not care to what country the name most properly belonged, if it were even the Hottentots, provided it did not favour of Jacobitism; and then beginning to inveigh afresh against her husband’s principles, provoked him to be no less severe on those she professed.

While they were railing, a thought came into Jenny’s head, which luckily put an end to this ridiculous controversy, and was, perhaps, the only way that could have done it. ‘ I have been considering on this matter,’ said she; ‘ not that I pretend to decide which of you is in the right; for, as the thing appears to me, you are both equally

in the wrong; but as I am to be god-mother to the child, and it is the very first time I have ever taken that charge upon me, I think I might have expected the compliment of giving the name.’

At these words the husband and wife looked on each other with a good deal of confusion, which lasted for some minutes: after which — ‘ Indeed, Madam,’ said he, turning to Jenny, ‘ our unpopularity well deserves this reprimand; but it is not yet too late, I hope, to make atonement; the honour you do us claims, at least, the retaliation you mention. Be pleased, therefore, to bestow upon the child what name you shall think proper; I shall readily acquiesce to whatsoever you make choice of, even though it should be Wilhelmina.’ — ‘ Nor will I oppose Miss Jessamy,’ rejoined the wife, very gravely; ‘ but flatter myself she will not call my poor baby by the cursed name of Charlotte.’ She said no more, but could not utter these few words without letting fall some tears of spite, which Jenny, as good-natured as she was, did not regard with much compassion. ‘ Since then you consent to leave this important matter to my decision,’ answered she with a smile, ‘ you may depend that I shall present my little god-daughter at the font neither by the name of Charlotte nor Wilhelmina; but, in compliment to a person who is much nearer to me than any Charles or William in the world, I shall call it Jennima.’ — ‘ I understand your reason for that, Madam, perfectly well,’ said the wife; ‘ I know Mr. Jessamy’s name is James; and I assure you, that I have so high a respect for that gentleman on his own account, as well as yours, that I shall be proud to have my child called after him.’ — ‘ I hold up both my hands in token of approbation!’ cried the husband; and was so well pleased with the choice Jenny had made, that he would doubtless have added something more, if he had not been prevented by the fears of rousing certain imaginations in his wife’s head, which he was glad to find had not yet entered there, on account of the name Jenny had mentioned.

Thus was this mighty controversy at last happily adjusted through the interposition of Jenny, to the entire satisfaction

tisfaction of one of the parties concerned, and without giving the other the least cause to think herself aggrieved. The next day having before been agreed upon for the performance of the ceremony, the infant was made a christian by that name which the fair and discreet mediator had proposed. Nothing happening afterwards of consequence enough to trouble the reader with the repetition of, I shall now return to the thread of my history, which it is more than possible some may condemn me for having interrupted.

CHAP. XXI.

IS VERY PROPER TO BE READ IN AN EASY-CHAIR, EITHER SOON AFTER DINNER, OR AT NIGHT JUST GOING TO REST.

THOSE people who are justly looked upon as the most fortunate, cannot pass through life without having their anxieties on some score or other; frequent rubs in the way to our desires, disappointments and vexations of various kinds, attend the whole race of man: they are inherent to our very species, and none can be said to be always totally exempt from them. It is a certain and established maxim, that as no one was ever so completely wretched as not to have some intervals of joy, so no one was ever so happy as not to have some portion of bitter mingled with the sweets of life. Sir Robert Howard thus accounts for the fluctuating state of human affairs.

- ‘ One gains by what another is bereft;
- ‘ The frugal destinies have only left
- ‘ A common bank of happiness below,
- ‘ Maintain’d, like nature, by an ebb and
‘ flow.’

The celebrated Mr. Dryden also expresses himself on the same subject in this manner.

- ‘ Good after ill; after pain, delight;
- ‘ Alternate, like the scenes of day and night.’

And another author of a more modern date, though no less worthy of estimation than either of the former, tells us, and his words are true.

- ‘ Eternal changes on our beings wait,
- ‘ Life’s certain downr, the chequer-work of
‘ fate.’

But though misfortunes are common to every one, yet they fall lighter or heavier according to the disposition of the person they lay hold on: dull and sluggish minds are apt to sink beneath the weight of the most arising ill; whereas the more active and spirited not only bear up with fortitude amidst the greatest, but also feel a pleasure in their deliverance from them, which they had never known, had they been ignorant of affliction. To find ourselves triumphant over difficulties, to have escaped some threatened calamity, to be raised from a state of mourning into one of joy and gladness, enhances our sensibility of happiness, and gives us a double relish in the possession, as old Broome, in one of his comedies, observes—

- ‘ Past woes the present blessings more endear.’

But I might have spared myself the trouble of quoting authors to prove this truth, which is in the experience of almost every one, in a more or less proportion: the heroine of this history, however, must doubtless be sensible of it in a much higher degree than many others, as she was possessed of a greater share of vivacity and sprightliness. The apprehensions, the terrors, which this amiable young lady had lately laboured under for the safety of Jemmy, being now entirely dissipated, by hearing from all hands that Bellpine was perfectly recovered; the satisfaction, the transport, that succeeded those anxieties, was such as, without having suffered the other, she never would have experienced. Besides, without this accident she might possibly never have been acquainted with the true tenderness of her own heart for him, nor with the sincerity of his affection for her; and it was the full conviction of both these which could alone enable her to taste the douceurs of love and friendship in that elevated manner she now did. To this, therefore, though it seemed the worst of mischiefs when it happened, did she owe the happiness she now enjoyed; and to this also was Jemmy indebted for that soft commu-

nication of hearts, which the volatileness of both their tempers had before denied them the blessing of partaking.

Her heart, however, was not so much taken up with love and gladness, as not to afford some room for commiseration to the misfortunes she saw others suffer. Sophia being now ready to depart, came to take her last farewell; and the dejection which appeared in the voice and countenance of that unhappy lady, touched her very deeply. 'Then you are resolved to leave us, my dear Sophia!' said she, embracing her. 'It was my fixed determination when last I saw you,' answered the other sighing; 'but if it had not been so, I have met with enough to convince me I had no other part to take.'—'Can any new insults have been offered to you?' demanded Jenny hastily. 'None,' replied she, 'that can exceed the baseness of those I had before received from that most consummate of all villains, Willmore; and this last only serves to prove he is incorrigible.'

'Happening to have some business the other day to cross the Park,' continued she, 'I met Willmore in the narrow passage leading from thence to Spring Garden. He had two persons with him, who, I suppose, by their habits, were officers in the army. They were all three arm in arm, and took up so much of the way, that it was impossible for me to pass by them without brushing. Willmore was next to me; and I could not, though I confess it was indiscreet, omit this opportunity of asking him, how he had the assurance to deny the debt he owed me. "Child, do not expose yourself: I wonder your friends let you go loose in this manner," cried he; and without staying to hear what farther I would say, went on. Just as they had passed by me, I heard one of those that were with him say—"Who is she?"—"A poor distracted creature, that follows me about," replied the monster; on which they all set up a horse-laugh.'

'I was frightened almost to death lest they should turn back, and also of being ill-used by the populace, as I perceived several people, hearing what they had said, stood still to stare at me: I plucked my hood over my

face, and ran as fast as I was able, to take shelter in a shop at the corner of the place, where I had certainly fainted away, if the master of it, seeing the condition I was in, had not brought me a glass of water. Judge now, my dear Miss Jessamy,' added she, 'if to remain in a place where I must expect to be made the publick ridicule, would not be a folly in me, even greater than that which has subjected me to it?'

'I have already testified,' replied Jenny, 'how much I approved your resolution of retiring, at least for a time: but I would wish to see you do so without pain; I would not have you stay, but would have you carry no sad ideas with you; and when you quit the scene of your misfortunes, quit the remembrance of them also.'

Tears were the only answer which the disconsolate Sophia was able to make for some time to this kind advice; but, recovering herself as soon as possible—'Ah, my dear Miss Jessamy!' said she, 'a heart so perfectly at ease as yours, is little able to comprehend the horrors mine must feel, thus doubly oppressed with shame and unavailing rage.' The good-natured Jenny then remonstrated to her, that as she had been guilty of no crime, she had no cause to take any shame to herself. 'You have been cruelly imposed upon indeed,' said she; 'but if you have believed too much, it was the sincerity of your own heart that would not suffer you to suspect another's could be base; and as for the loss of so considerable a part of your fortune by the injustice of Willmore, that misfortune will seem less to you when compared with what worse evils you might have sustained, if marriage had bestowed the whole of what you are mistress of, as well as your person, on a man of such abandoned principles.'

The fair afflicted acknowledged the justice of these arguments, particularly the last; and confessed, that, to a virtuous woman, the lowest and most abject station in life was infinitely preferable to being the wife of a man who had neither honour nor humanity. In discourses of this nature did these two ladies pass most of the time they were together. On parting, Jenny obliged the other to accept of a small diamond ring, in token of her friendship; con-
jured

pared her to write often to her; and assured her, that there were very few things which could afford her more real satisfaction than to hear that her tranquillity was perfectly restored. The last embrace was accompanied with tears on both sides; and Jenny, after being left alone, could not restrain her eyes from letting fall a second shower. 'Poor Sophia!' cried she, 'what cruel star presided at thy nativity, and subjected thee to such dreadful and undeserved misfortunes!'

But afterwards, on beginning to reflect more deeply on the source of that lady's unhappiness—'Yet how unjust and silly is it in us,' said she, 'to lay the blame of our misdeeds on destiny? It is our own actions make our fate; else to what end is reason given us? wherefore are we endued with the power of thinking, of judging, of comparing, but to defend our hearts from any dangerous impressions? Fate, fortune,' continued she, 'their resistible decrees of over-ruling powers, to which people impute whatever calamities they suffer, are only mentioned to excuse the inadvertencies they have been guilty of; so strictly true is the inimitable Cowley's observation on this head:

"'Tis our own wisdom moulds our state;
Our faults or virtues make our fate."

Thus justly did the considerate Jenny reason within herself on the condition of Sophia: though she had always preserved a very great friendship for that lady, and sincerely commiserated her present misfortunes, yet she could not absolve from blame the conduct which had reduced her to them; for a young woman, who wanted not understanding, to resign her heart, trust her fortune, and afterwards her person, in the hands of a man whom she had known but a short space of time, and whose character and principles she was utterly unacquainted with, seemed to her an indiscretion no less inexcusable than it was strange.

'I do not like that sort of love,' said she, 'which comes at once upon us, and is inspired merely by exterior perfections. Beauty may attract the eye; but, in my opinion, is not sufficient to engage the heart: the face

is not always the index of the mind; those qualifications which alone merit our affections, are not presently to be discovered; and I am amazed how any woman can resolve to give up her liberty to a man, without being able to alledge something farther in justification of her choice than his having an agreeable person.' These were the dictates of her severer reason; but they were soon overpowered by the more prevailing softness of her nature, and swallowed up amidst a flood of joy. 'Yet, why do I think this way!' cried she again; 'the circumstances of my fortune have rendered me no competent judge of the passion I pretend to condemn. Much certainly may be said in defence of poor Sophia: her heart was tender, unprepossessed, and ready to receive the first impression. She had conversed little with the world, was entirely ignorant of the artifices which the villainous part of mankind are capable of putting in practice to deceive our sex, and had no friend to advise or warn her against the danger: I should therefore, perhaps, be no less inexcusable in censuring this unhappy creature, than she is in having yielded to that fatal impulse, by which so many, and some too of the best understanding, have been seduced.'

She was in the depth of these meditations, when a servant from Lady Wingman came to acquaint her, that her company was immediately desired at her house; and also that her ladyship insisted that, putting off all other engagements, she would resolve to pass the whole evening with her. Jenny dismissed the fellow with her compliments, and an assurance that she would accept the invitation her ladyship favoured her with, as soon as she could get herself ready, she being then in an entire dishabille, not having intended to go abroad that day. Accordingly she called her maid that moment to her assistance, and as she never wasted much time in dressing, was soon equipped for the performance of her promise; but remembering it was past day, would not, on any consideration, omit answering her dear Jimmy's letter; therefore sat down and wrote to him in the following terms.

'TO

‘ TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

‘ MY DEAR JEMMY,

‘ I Always receive every thing that comes from you with an inexpressible satisfaction; but your last afforded me a more than double portion, as the strain in which you write assures me, that the air of Paris has already begun to dissipate some part of those melancholy ideas you carried with you, which I shall love it for as long as I live.

‘ I flatter myself that, by the time this reaches your hand, you will have visited some of those fine places which are so much talked of here, and expect you will give me a short sketch of every thing you see, in order to prepare my attention for a more particular description of it hereafter: in the mean time, I shall bottle up all the occurrences that shall happen to fall in my way, to entertain you with on your return.

‘ I have nothing worth your notice at present to acquaint you with, except that I am happy in the frequent visits of your two very sincere friends Mr. Ellwood and Mr. Morgan. I need not tell you, when either of them are with me, on what the conversation chiefly turns. They easily perceive they can talk on no subject so pleasing to me as yourself; and I am perfectly well convinced, by the warmth with which they speak of you, that it is not altogether owing to their complaisance to me, but, in a great measure, to gratify their own inclinations, that your name and virtues are so often mentioned.

‘ Lady Wingman has now just sent for me in very great haste; I know not, as yet, on what occasion; but would not disoblige her ladyship by being too tardy in complying with her request; so must bid you adieu for this time. Be assured I am, and ever shall be, with the sincerest, tenderest affection, my dear Jemmy, as much as you can wish or expect, yours,

‘ J. JESSAMY.

‘ P. S. The accounts I have concerning Bellpine are very favourable; but let not this intelligence hasten your return one moment sooner than you are quite weary of the place you are in.

She had but just sealed up this, and ordered her servant to carry it to the post, when a second message from Lady Wingman arrived, and presented her with a little billet from Lord Huntley, folded in the shape of a true lover's knot; and contained these lines.

‘ TO MISS JESSAMY.

‘ MADAM,

‘ COME, charmer, come; but leave your cares behind;

‘ To your friends happiness be all resign'd:

‘ Haste to congratulate rewarded love;

‘ A bliss you'll one day give, and Jemmy prove;

‘ In the same manner as does, Madam, your most obedient servant, the transported

‘ HUNTLEY.’

Jenny easily found, by this rhapsody, that his lordship's marriage with Miss Wingman was agreed upon, if not already celebrated; and, as she had a very great respect both for the one and the other of them, bid her chairmen make all the haste they could to carry her to the scene of joy.

CH A P. XXII.

CONTAINS, AMONG SUNDRY INTERESTING AND ENTERTAINING PARTICULARS, A CERTAIN PROPOSAL, AGREEMENT, AND RESOLUTION, SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED, HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO ONE OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED, AND NO LESS PLEASING TO THE OTHER.

JENNY, being shewed up into Lady Wingman's great drawing-room, found Lady Speck, Miss Speck, Miss Wingman, Lord Huntley, Mr. Lovegrove, and Sir Thomas Welby, with her ladyship: the highest gaiety appeared in all their countenances, except in those of Miss Wingman and Mr. Lovegrove, who both looked extremely serious, though for very different reasons.

This had, indeed, been a pretty extraordinary day. Lady Wingman having consented to give her daughter to Lord Huntley; and Sir Thomas Welby highly

highly approving that union between them, the marriage-articles were that morning signed; and it was either that the intended bride thought it became her to look grave on this occasion, or that the thoughts of being so near entering into a new scene of life, made her really so, which caused an unusual sedateness in her behaviour. As to Mr. Lovegrove, the encouragement he had lately received from Lady Speck, and the knowledge that she had discarded all her lovers, except himself, had given him courage that day to press her in more strong terms than ever he had done before, for the completion of his wishes; at which she had seemed very much offended; and told him, that the man who had not love and patience enough to wait till she discovered an inclination to change her condition, should find that she never would do so in his favour.

This cruel rebuff from a mistress he had courted for so long a time, did not, however, hinder him from waiting on her to Lady Wingman's, having before received an invitation from her ladyship to come there; but it cast, notwithstanding, such a dejection on his spirits as was not in his power to conceal, though he attempted it as much as possible. But Jenny had not presently an opportunity to observe this change in him, or to make her compliments to any of the company: she had scarce returned the first salutation of Lady Wingman, before Lord Huntley, catching fast hold of both her hands—'Dear Miss Jessamy,' cried he, 'you were so good to take part in my distresses at Bath, and, I flatter myself, will no less do so in the assurances I now have of being shortly the happiest man in the world.'

'Shortly, my lord!' replied she; 'you surprize me! I imagined, by the billet I just now received, that the ceremony was over, and that your lordship was already a bridegroom!' On this, Sir Thomas Welby took up the word—'No, Madam,' said he, 'I have not yet given up my fair charge; but have promised to put her entirely into his lordship's possession on Tuesday next, according to the institution, till death do them part; and it was to engage you to be witness of this form that your company was desired.'—'That is not all, Sir Tho-

'mas,' cried Lady Speck: 'we have something more than being present at the wedding to require of Miss Jessamy.'—'Yes,' rejoined Miss Wingman; 'something that, I fancy, will be much more agreeable to herself.'—'There is hardly a possibility,' answered Jenny, 'for either of you to require any thing of me that will not be agreeable; but I am very much at a loss to guess what can be more so than to behold an union which affords so fair a prospect of lasting happiness to persons for whom I have the greatest honour and esteem.' Lord Huntley was just opening his mouth to make some return to this compliment; but was prevented by Lady Speck, who cried out—'You must know, Miss Jessamy, that we have all taken it into our heads to go to Paris; and are resolved to have you with us.'

'To Paris, Madam!' demanded Jenny, strangely amazed: 'Pray, what does your ladyship mean?'—'We all mean alike,' said Miss Wingman, smiling; 'and are determined to take no denial: you needs must go with us, and fetch home Mr. Jessamy.'

All the presence of mind Jenny was usually mistress of, could not now enable her to recover herself enough from the astonishment she was in to desire an explanation of all this; nor even to ask whether what they had said to her was meant in earnest or in jest. The ladies laughed heartily; but Lord Huntley, pitying her confusion, took upon himself to unfold the mystery.

He told her that his dear Miss Wingman, having an utter aversion to those formal visits of congratulation always made to persons of condition on their marriage, and believing she should be no less troubled with them in the country than in town, had testified a desire of going to France; that Lady Speck, approving of the motion, had promised to accompany them; and, in fine, that it was agreed among them to set out for Dover, in order to embark for Calais, immediately after the ceremony was performed. Lady Wingman confirmed what Lord Huntley had said; and added, that, as her daughters earnestly desired Miss Jessamy would accompany them, she joined her entreaties they might not be refused this satisfaction.

That flutter which had seized on Jenny's heart at the first mention of
this

this tour to Paris was not quite gone off, yet she answered with her accustomed sprightliness, that, since the ladies did her the honour to invite her, she should not be so much an enemy to herself, as to refuse making one in so agreeable a party.

Then turning to Mr. Lovegrove, who had not spoke all this while—‘I suppose, Sir,’ said she, ‘you are to be one of the company?’—‘Yes,’ Madam,’ replied he, casting at the same time a kind of reproachful look on Lady Speck; ‘Lord Huntley and Miss Wingman have been so good to insist on my being so; and I should obey their commands with an infinity of pleasure, if I could flatter myself that my presence was no less acceptable to every one that goes.’

‘I understand you, Sir,’ cried Lady Speck; ‘and so, I believe, do all here: this is because I did not ask you to go. Indeed, I thought the knowledge I went was sufficient to engage you, by whomsoever the invitation was given.’—‘You thought right,’ Madam,’ returned he; ‘yet I should have been glad to have attended you by your own permission.’

‘Well, well,’ said she, ‘since you are so particular, and oblige me to be so too, I will give you your humour for once; and tell you that, without you, I should lose half the satisfaction I propose to myself in this excursion.’

‘This is an assurance, Madam,’ answered he, in a transported accent, ‘as much beyond my expectations as my power of ever deserving it, and demands all the acknowledgments of my future life.’—‘I expect no more,’ returned she, with a smile, ‘than that you will not presume too far upon it.’

Had they been alone, he doubtless would have thrown himself at her feet, and said a thousand fine things to her on the occasion; but the presence of so many witnesses obliged him to defer his raptures till a more convenient opportunity allowed him to indulge them. To prevent him, however, from saying any thing more than she wished him to do at that time, she went on—‘I fancy,’ cried she, ‘that to see the behaviour of Mr. Jessamy on so unexpected a meeting with his mistress, will afford a good deal of pleasantry to us all.’

‘I had the honour, Madam,’ said Lord Huntley, ‘to have just the same thought with your ladyship: it must needs be an admirable scene, if we can prevail with Miss Jessamy not to apprise her lover of her coming.’ Jenny, who was willing to give her friends this satisfaction, and, besides, was herself extremely delighted with the conceit, laughed heartily, and protested she would observe as much secrecy in this point as his lordship could desire.

After this, they fell into some discourse concerning their intended journey; in what manner they should set out; what route they were to take; by what number of servants it would be necessary they should be attended; and such-like particulars; which having settled, so as to be most for the ease and convenience of the ladies, Lord Huntley, who knew Paris perfectly well, farther added, that it would be highly proper a large hotel should be hired for their reception on their arrival; and that, as Sir Robert Manley was luckily there, he would write to him, and beg that favour of him.

This proposal seemed too commodious to be rejected; only Lady Speck said that she feared it would destroy their design of surprising Mr. Jessamy; for as Jenny had told him of the intimacy that was now grown between him and Sir Robert, it could scarce be doubted but that the latter would inform his new friend what company he might soon expect to see. ‘Not, if I request him to the contrary, Madam,’ replied Lord Huntley; ‘which I shall do in the strongest terms I am able, as you shall all be witness of,’ continued he, ‘if Lady Wingman will favour me with her standish, and forgive the liberty I take of writing in her presence.’ He had no sooner spoke than Miss Wingman ran herself into the next room, and fetched all the necessary utensils wanting for him to do as he had said; and he then sat down to a side-table, and wrote in the following manner.

‘TO SIR ROBERT MANLEY.

‘DEAR SIR ROBERT,

WHAT so much testifies the excess of any passion as the being unable to express it? It is utterly impossible for me to describe the present transport

transport of my soul; but you will easily conceive it, when I tell you that my so-long adored Miss Wingman has at last consented to be mine.

Next Tuesday is fixed upon to make me the happiest of mankind; and it is also agreed upon, that, for the sake of avoiding those troublesome formalities usual on such occasions, we shall that same day set out on our way to France; where, it is no compliment to assure you, my felicity will receive no inconsiderable addition by your being a witness of it.

We shall come to Paris accompanied by Lady Speck, Mr. Lovegrove, and a third person, whose name I am not at liberty to mention; but, if you chance to guess at it, must insist upon your not acquainting Mr. Jessamy with any part of your conjectures on that head; and, upon second thoughts, it will be still better, if, to prevent all suspicion in him, you keep him in an entire ignorance that any of us are expected.

You will, perhaps, laugh at this injunction; but I make it at the request of the ladies, whose desires, I know, you always take a pleasure in complying with. I write this in their presence: they all send their compliments; and, as well as Mr. Lovegrove, join with me in entreating a favour of a more serious nature; which is, that you will be so good as to employ some person who knows the town, to hire a handsome hotel, with all other proper accommodations for us against our arrival, that the fair travellers may meet with no more embarrassments at the end of the journey than they would do in stepping into their own country-seat.

I shall not pretend to direct your choice in the situation of a place; I am convinced you will fix on such a one as you shall find most agreeable: neither will I attempt any apology for the trouble I give you. I am too well acquainted with your heart to think I stand in need of any; and hope you are enough so with mine to assure yourself that I am, with the greatest friendship and esteem, dear Sir Robert, your most obedient and most humble servant,

HUNTLEY.

P. S. I beg leave to recommend as much expedition in this affair as

possible; for, though we propose travelling at our ease, we shall certainly, barring accidents, be with you in twelve days at farthest from the date hereof.

After having read this to the company, and received their approbation of it, he sealed it up, in order to have it carried to the post; but Jenny, finding they should not reach Paris in less than twelve days, desired that errand might be deferred for a few minutes. She considered that, before the expiration of the time his lordship mentioned, Jemmy would certainly not only write to her, but also expect an answer from her; and thinking herself under an obligation to prevent him from entertaining any uneasy apprehensions on that disappointment, begged leave to take up the pen Lord Huntley had laid down, and write a few lines to him. 'Ah, Madam!' cried Lord Huntley, 'how are we sure you will not undo all I have been doing, and apprise Mr. Jessamy of our plot upon him?'—'No, upon my honour,' replied she, laughing; 'but, if you will not take my word, Miss Wingman and Lady Speck, if her ladyship will give herself that trouble, shall read what I write to him.' She said no more, but sat down to the table; whence she returned in a very small space of time, and, according to her promise, submitted to Miss Wingman's perusal what she had been writing. This little epistle was as follows.

TO JAMES JESSAMY, ESQ.

MY DEAR JEMMY,

YOU will wonder at receiving two letters from me by one post; but I cannot suffer that any pains you take on my account should be thrown away. I have engaged myself to see my charming friend Miss Wingman give her hand to Lord Huntley, and also to accompany the happy pair in an excursion they propose to make immediately after their marriage. According to the manner in which they have regulated the route we are to take, it will be ten or twelve days before we stay at any one place scarce longer than merely for necessary refreshments; so that it will be absolutely impossible for me to give you

‘ any exact directions where to send to me during that time.

‘ I beg, therefore, that you will not think of writing till you hear from me again; which, you may be certain, will be as soon as I shall find myself in a situation to hope for an answer from you: till when content yourself with the assurance, that, wherever I am, I shall always be, with the greatest tenderness, my dear
‘ Jemmy, your most affectionate and
‘ most faithful

‘ J. JESSAMY.’

Miss Wingman, on reading this, declared to her sister, and the whole company, that Jenny had betrayed no part of their design; but, on the contrary, had wrote in such a manner as would rather prevent than raise any suspicion in Mr. Jessamy of the truth; and, in short, that she had done no more than what love, friendship, politeness, and even good-nature, demanded from a person in her circumstances.

The remainder of the evening was chiefly taken up with conversation on their intended journey, which afforded an ample field for wit and pleasantry. They separated not till it was very late; and even Lady Wingman and Sir Thomas Welby seemed to have forgot their age and gravity, to participate, in some measure, in the good-humour and sprightliness of those who were fired with more gay and sanguine expectations.

CHAP. XXIII.

CONTAINS, AMONG OTHER PARTICULARS OF LESS MOMENT, AN INCIDENT, WHICH, TO EVERY READER OF A DISTINGUISHING CAPACITY, MUST CERTAINLY APPEAR AS EXTRAORDINARY AS IT DID TO OUR FAIR HEROINE HERSELF, OR, INDEED, ANY OTHER IN THE WHOLE HISTORY.

AN excess of satisfaction is sometimes as great an enemy to repose as an excess of grief: so little is human nature able to sustain the violence of any passion! Though Jenny went not into bed till almost the time in which she usually rose, yet could she not submit that those pleasing ideas she

was now possessed of should be lost in sleep and inactivity of thought. Never, indeed, had she experienced a contentment more sincere, a joy more perfect, than that she now felt. Scarce could Lord Huntley long with greater impatience for the day which was to put him in possession of his wishes than she did for the arrival of it, as it was the day on which she was to set out on so agreeable a journey, the end of which promised her such an infinity of pleasure, in surprizing dear Jemmy with her unexpected presence.

It is certain that so agreeable a tour, taken in the company of persons of such high rank and fortune, and who, she was convinced, had a perfect friendship for her; the going to a place so famous for it's variety of amusements; had something in it extremely ravishing to a young heart, had love been entirely out of the question: yet, it is no less certain, that this last was the prevailing motive, the verb by which all desires of her soul were governed, and the rest no more than mere adjectives; that was the grand structure her expectation formed, the others no more than exterior embellishments. Tasso, the Italian poet, seems to have, in my opinion, a very just notion of this passion, when he makes Armida, in his celebrated piece of Godfridus, say—

‘ Love, the great aim of all created beings!
‘ The source and center of our hopes and
‘ fears!
‘ From that they flow, in that they terminate.’

I know not whether, in my translation of this passage, I have done the original all the justice it deserves; but how much soever I may have wronged that great author in the expression, am pretty certain that I cannot be mistaken in his meaning. I believe, however, that very few of my readers, especially those of the softer sex, will stand in need of any comment on the present disposition of Jenny's heart; their own will sufficiently inform them what hers must feel in the pleasing idea of rushing unexpectedly, undreamed of, unthought of, upon a lover so deservingly beloved; who, she knew, languished to behold her, and whom she languished to behold. But, notwithstanding all the pretty images she pictured in her mind,

mind, on account of this meeting, she suffered not herself to be so much engrossed by them as to neglect the settling her affairs in a proper manner before she went away. She sent for Mr. Morgan and Mr. Ellwood, told them she was going out of town for some time, but without acquainting either of them to what place, and desired that they would give, during her absence, such directions to Jemmy's steward and housekeeper as should be found necessary. 'She had also some business to dispatch before her departure, in relation to remittances and accounts, with those gentlemen, who were her own trustees; and this, with some articles concerning what habits and ornaments she should carry with her, was, as any one may suppose, sufficient employment for the short space of time between her agreeing to go on this journey and her taking it.

There were very few of her acquaintance of whom she took any leave, and none to whom she imparted the route she was about to pursue; telling them only that she had engaged herself to take a little ramble into the country with Lady Speck and Miss Wingman; though the sole motive she had for preserving such secrecy in this point was to avoid the railleries she must have expected to be treated with, in case they had known she was going to the place which Jemmy had made choice of for his refuge.

She was returned to her apartment, after having paid the above-mentioned compliment to those who, by their age or condition, most exacted it from her. Every necessary preparation for her journey was already made, and it was the eve of that important day on which she was to set out, and she had nothing now to do but to indulge contemplations on the happy consequence. The humour she was in at present was so serene and sweet, that one would have thought there was scarce a possibility for any thing to have discomposed her; yet did the compass of a very few minutes serve to dissipate all the sunny cheerfulness of her mind, and convert the late calm into a sudden tempest of disdain and indignation. Her footman came hastily into the room, and told her, that a gentleman in a chair begged leave to speak with her, if at home and alone. 'Who is he?' cried she, 'He did not

'send up his name,' replied the fellow; 'but by the glimpse I had of him between the curtains, I think it is Mr. —.' Before he could pronounce the name, Bellpine rushed in. He had justly doubted of admittance, and, resolute to see her, had got out of his chair, and followed the servant directly up stairs. Jenny was astonished, and started at the sight of him; but he prevented her from speaking by a profound reverence, accompanied by these words: 'I feared, Madam,' said he, 'the disadvantageous opinion you have been inspired with of my principles and behaviour, might have excited you to deny me the privilege of saying something to you of much more consequence than the life which has been so cruelly attacked, and so miraculously preserved, and which, not to have uttered, I should have died a double death.'

'If you have been attacked,' replied she, looking on him with the extremest scorn, 'you justly merited it; and if preserved, must be as vain as you are safe, to imagine it any mark of Heaven's favour to yourself. But to what pretence,' demanded she, 'to what new artifice, to disturb my quiet, am I indebted for this unexpected, this unwelcome visit?'—'Ah, Madam!' cried he, casting his eyes round the room to see if the servant was withdrawn, and finding he was so, 'great as my offences are,' went he on, 'they rise not to that enormous height as in a wish to persevere in them. I rather come,' continued he, putting one knee to the ground, 'like a repentant sinner, to throw myself at the throne of mercy, and, in this humble posture, confess my crimes, and implore forgiveness.'—'There is no need of confession where the facts are fully proved,' said she, with the same contempt as before; 'you have already received the punishment of them from a hand best able to inflict it, and have nothing to fear from my resentment.'

'Yet, Madam,' resumed he, 'I have much to hope from your forgiveness; it is that, indeed, on which my soul's eternal peace depends; it is not that I dread a second blow from Mr. Jessamy, should he be inclined to repeat it, even were I certain his better fortune would again give him the advantage over me, and his revengeful

'sword bathe itself in my heart's best blood; nor it is the remembrance of my wounds, nor all the painful circumstances of my tedious cure, that is capable of giving me the least alarm; but it is the sad remorse that I have been guilty of any thing to forfeit that portion of esteem I once was favoured with by you, which, like a vulture, preys upon my vitals, and fills me with ideas too terrible for nature to sustain. Oh, therefore, have compassion! vouchsafe to say you hate me not; that you pardon all I have done; and, while I live, I will live only in the study how to deserve such goodness.'

His words, the seeming contrition in which he uttered them, his pathetic gestures, his pale and dejected countenance, all together gave him such a pity-moving air, as made Jenny lose much of the fierceness she had assumed. 'Mr. Jessamy,' said she, 'is the person whose friendship you have so grossly abused; whom chiefly you have wronged; and if he can be brought to forgive the mischief you intended for us both, I shall easily remit that part of it which concerns myself; therefore, pray rise: I am neither accustomed to receive, nor desire any such submissions.'—'No, Madam,' replied this artful dissembler, 'I must not quit this humble posture till I have disclosed the whole of my transgression. It is not enough that you pardon the faults I have been guilty of, without you vouchsafe also the same grace to the motive which induced me to commit them.'—'Motive!' cried she hastily; 'what motive but the most fiend-like disposition could tempt any man to behave as you have done?'—'Yes, Madam,' rejoined he, 'there is one, which, if I were as certain you would absolve, as I am that the whole world besides would applaud me for, I should be the most blessed among my sex. It was love, Madam! love of the most angelick being that Heaven ever formed, that has rendered me the criminal I seem.'

Finding she made no answer, as indeed it was impossible she should in the present confusion of her thoughts on so amazing a declaration—'Yes, charming Miss Jessamy,' went he still on, 'if I have been base, ungrateful, false to the rules of honour and of friend-

ship, it was your lovely self that made me so.'—'Me, villain! Me!' She, as yet, was able to bring forth no more, and he had the opportunity of replying—'Blame not,' said he, 'the effects of your own beauty, but rather pity a passion which made me deaf to every other consideration. The more I have forgot the principles to which my youth were bred, the more I have erred, the more I have proved the unbounded violence of my love; and even those very transgressions have some claim to a grateful recompense from you.'—'Monstrous, unheard of impudence!' returned she, a little recovered from her surprise. 'Had you the vanity and folly to imagine, that if your wicked arts had succeeded to separate me from Mr. Jessamy, I should ever have descended to cast my eyes on you?'—'I am a gentleman, Madam,' answered he, rising from the posture he had all this time been in, 'of as good a family as Mr. Jessamy, and heir to an estate not inferior to his. I knew, indeed, you were designed for him in your childhood, but was ignorant that your partial fancy preferred him to all other men; and therefore hoped——' 'I will hear no more,' interrupted she, 'nor suffer in my sight a wretch whose unexampled baseness renders him even below my anger.'

In speaking this she rung her bell; and the footman immediately coming up—'Shew this gentleman down,' said she, 'and take care he enters here no more.' On this, Bellpine's late paleness turned to a fiery red. 'You might have saved yourself this charge, Madam,' cried he; 'I shall not trouble you with a second visit;' and then slung out of the room without the least mark either of that love, or that humility, which he had, but a few moments before, taken so much pains to counterfeit.

It may, perhaps, seem strange to some people, that a man of so much subtlety as Bellpine, should venture to take a step which could reasonably promise nothing less than the mortification he received; but a very small share of observation is sufficient to inform us, that those who are most cunning in deceiving others, are frequently deceived themselves by their own vanity; as was the case with him.

The

The civilities which, on Jemmy's recommendation, he had been treated with by this lady, had made him imagine, on his first acquaintance with her, that she considered him with an extraordinary regard, and that it would not be very difficult to improve that regard into a sester passion, if a favourable opportunity should once offer for his attempting it. The precariousness of his circumstances, as has already been observed, the largeness of her fortune, and, it is probable, some share of inclination for her person, made him presently envy the friend who introduced him; and to endeavour, by all possible methods, how ungenerous and wicked soever, to exclude him from a happiness he wished to be in possession of himself. The reader has seen how all the plots for this purpose were defeated, and how at last he began to despair of ever being able to succeed. On his recovering, however, his former views began to re-take possession of his mind; he thought things could not be worse with him than they were, and that it would be worth his while to try at least by one bold push if he could not retrieve all.

The report he had caused to be spread concerning the imminent danger he was in from his wound, he found had made Jemmy keep abroad, which was the sole end he proposed by it; being also told that Jenny appeared with the same gaiety as ever, he had flattered himself with the hopes that absence and this accident had somewhat weaned her affection from it's former object, and that she had vanity enough to make her pleased with what he had done, when he should tell her, it was occasioned only by the violence of a passion she had inspired him with.

But the contempt with which our heroine treated this declaration, notwithstanding his disappointment and the vexation he conceived at it, forced him to confess that there are women who set no value on such effects of their beauty as they find not accompanied with honour and virtue.

C H A P. XXIV.

GIVES A VERY SUCCINCT ACCOUNT
OF THE HAPPY ACCOMPLISH-

MENT OF AN AFFAIR AS YET
QUITE UNTHOUGHT-OF BY THE
READER; AND ALSO OF ANOTHER
WHICH HAS BEEN LONG AXC-
PECTED, WITH OTHER PARTICU-
LARS OF LESS CONSEQUENCE.

JENNY was so much disconcerted at Bellpine's visit, and the manner in which she had been entertained by him, that it was a considerable time before she was able to bring back her temper to it's accustomed serenity; and when the emotions of anger and disdain were a little subsided, they yet left a certain heaviness upon her spirits, which made her fall into reflections of the most serious nature.

'How greatly,' said she, 'does the name of love suffer by the unworthiness of it's pretended votaries? How is that passion, which in reality refines the mind, and fills it only with sublime ideas, made the veil to cover the most foul and most detestable designs, and also an excuse for the worst of villainies when perpetrated?'

'That woman must certainly be very weak,' continued she, 'who believes herself truly beloved by a man who has recourse to dishonourable means for the accomplishment of his wishes: if this wretch has in earnest been instigated to act as he has done by any inclinations for me, they must be of such a sort as I should blush to inspire; and I am amazed that my sex should plume themselves, as I have seen some do, in addresses which either have no meaning at all, or such as are not consistent with their virtue or reputation to encourage.'

Her maid now coming in to ask some questions concerning the packing-up of her things, she started from the reverie she had been in, and went into her dressing-room to give the necessary directions, where, busying herself in assisting the execution of her own orders, the pleasing thoughts of her journey drove those of Bellpine pretty much out of her head, though not so entirely, but that the remembrance of his complicated impudence and hypocrisy would sometimes intervene. It would be superfluous to trouble the reader with a detail of those avocations in which she passed the remainder of that evening, as nothing

nothing happened of consequence enough to afford either much delight or improvement.

Ten the next morning being the hour appointed to celebrate the nuptials of Lord Huntley and Miss Wingman, she arose pretty early, dressed herself in a rich riding-habit, and went to Lady Wingman's in a chair, leaving her maid, who was to attend her in this expedition, to follow with the luggage in a hackney-coach.

She found all the company already there, except the reverend divine, who came in a few minutes after. Sir Thomas Welby presented the bride, and the ceremony was instantly performed; but the wedded pair had scarce time to receive the benediction of Lady Wingman, and the congratulations of those friends who were present, before Mr. Lovegrove took Lady Speck by the hand, and led her towards Sir Thomas, saying—'Sir, I must entreat the favour of you to become a father a second time this morning, and bestow a blessing on me which my whole life shall thank you for.'—'How is this!' cried the old baronet, very much astonished, as was every one in the room. 'Is it possible!' added the new-married Lady Huntley; 'sister, are you in earnest? really going to be married to Mr. Lovegrove?'

'Even so indeed, my dear sister,' replied Lady Speck laughing; 'I have suffered him too long as a lover not to make a husband of him at last.' Then turning to Lady Wingman—'I beg pardon, Madam,' continued she, 'for not consulting your ladyship in this affair; but you gave me away once, and now I thought myself at liberty to make my own choice.'

'Indeed, daughter,' said that lady, 'it is a choice which I should long ago have made for you myself, if, as you justly say, I had not lost my right of directing your inclinations, by your having been married before: however, I must do you the justice to acknowledge, you exercise not the power you now have over your actions but in favour of a gentleman, who you were very certain would not only receive my approbation, but that of every one who has any acquaintance with his merit.'

It is not to be doubted but that Mr.

Lovegrove, who is one of the most polite men on earth, returned this compliment from the mother of his mistress in terms full of submission and respect. Lord Huntley, his fair bride, and Jenny, were all this while got together, expressing to each other the most glad surprize at this event. 'It affords me,' said the former, 'a double portion of satisfaction, to see my friend's happiness go hand in hand with mine;' which Mr. Lovegrove overheard just as he had done speaking to Lady Wingman—'My dear lord,' cried he, 'though yesterday I thought myself as far removed from the completion of my wishes as I now am near, I protest to your lordship that I found room in my heart to rejoice in your good fortune, while despairing of my own.'

'Aye, aye, we are all very well pleased,' said Sir Thomas Welby; 'but do not let us make the reverend gentleman wait any longer.—Come, my fair daughter-elect,' pursued he, taking Lady Speck by the hand, 'put yourself under my jurisdiction for a minute or two, that I may consign my short-lived authority to one whose every command, I dare answer, you will find a pleasure in obeying.'

Here the remembrance of some disagreeable passages in her former marriage, made Lady Speck shudder a little at the thoughts of venturing on a second; but she had great experience of Mr. Lovegrove's temper; she had promised to be his, both in private, and now before all this company; so threw off all apprehensions, and advanced with her usual sprightliness towards the clergyman, who had his book ready opened in order to begin the ceremony.

Jenny, who till this morning had never happened to be present at these sacred rites, was filled with the most solemn meditations during the performance, especially on the repetition for this second couple; she found something so binding in the contract, so awful in the injunction laid on the married persons by the ordinance, that she was amazed to think there could be any one hardy enough to infringe it. She thought, nevertheless, that the obligation would make a greater impression, and have more weight with those who entered into it, if celebrated in a place consecrated,

C H A P. XXV.

CONTAINS A DEAL OF BUSINESS IN
A NARROW COMPASS.

consecrated to divine worship, than in one which was usually the scene of feasting, dancing, and all kinds of pleasure, if no worse. 'Marriage,' said she within herself, 'is the great action of our lives, the hinge on which our happiness or misery, while we have breath, depends; the more respect we pay to the institution, the more we shall be careful to observe its rules; and I can see no justifiable reason for avoiding to solemnize it in the temple of him who first ordained, and who alone has power to render it a blessing.'

These reflections frequently recurred to her mind, but she had no opportunity at present to proceed in them. Mr. Lovegrove, now put in possession of the happiness he so long had sought, was already receiving the felicitations of his friends; and she, who sincerely rejoiced in his good fortune, would not be slow in testifying the sense she had of it.

Lady Wingman, who was a great lover of old customs, had prepared a rich cake, which Sir Thomas Welby immediately broke over the heads of the bridegrooms and their brides; the servants were all called in to partake of this oblation to Ceres, after which they went down to see if the equipage was ready for setting out.

The leave this happy company took of Lady Wingman and Sir Thomas Welby was very short, as it was now past one o'clock, and they purposed to reach Sittingbourn that evening; they went all together in a landau, chusing to sit close rather than be separated; their women-attendants, which were also five in number, were crammed into Lady Speck's old travelling-coach, with such things as they knew the ladies would require for present use upon the road, and the more heavy baggage placed behind and before it.

Notwithstanding the privacy with which these weddings had been conducted, a crowd of mendicants, having got a scent of what was doing, had gathered about the house, and hung upon the doors and even wheels of the landau; but Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove, throwing out handfuls of money for them to scramble for, the machine was soon freed from this incumbrance, and drove away, escorted by nine servants on horseback, valets included.

LIFE affords but few amusements which are more agreeable than travelling, when in a party of select friends, who have all of them their hearts at ease, and think of nothing but to divert themselves. The company which now set out from Lady Wingman's were in a situation as near to perfect happiness as can be tasted on this side eternity: Jenny was the only person in a state of expectation, yet was she no less alert and gay than those who had already obtained the ultimate of their desires.

When they had got free from the tumultuous din, the smoke, the stench, and rugged stones of London—'I begin already,' said this amiable lady with a smile, 'to taste the pleasures of this journey: but you little suspect how much I have been tempted not to take it; and when I make you the confidantes of an adventure that happened to me last night, you will confess that I am a woman of great resolution in keeping the promise I gave of accompanying you.' On this they all cried to her not to keep them in suspense: 'I will not,' resumed she; 'and hope you will not think me too vain a boaster, when I tell you at once that I have made a new conquest; have gained a heart all flaming and adoration; a lover who, for my sake, has done such things as, I believe, no man besides himself ever did or would do!'

'Nobody doubts the power of your charms, my dear,' said Lady Speck; 'but pray, who is this lover? for he must be one of whom you are either very fond, or think not worth concealing.'—'I dare answer by her looks,' subjoined Lord Huntley, 'that he is the latter: but pray, Madam, let us have his name?'

'I will not put your lordship, nor any of the company, to the trouble of guessing,' replied Jenny; 'for should you all go to work upon that task, it would certainly last till we came to Paris, and even then be as far from being accomplished as now: know then, that the hero of my true romance,

‘romance, the man who dies for me, is called Bellpine.’—‘Bellpine! Bellpine! Impossible!’ repeated they all several times over. ‘He, sure, could not have the impudence!’ cried Lady Huntley: ‘but, dear creature, let us have the whole story; it must, however, be very entertaining.’

Jenny then related to them Bellpine’s visit, his discourse, and the manner of his behaviour towards her; and this she did with so much wit and spirit, as could not but be extremely pleasing to the company. They laughed heartily at some passages in the recital; and their mirth would have been yet more complete, had it not been somewhat checked by their astonishment at his unparalleled impudence and deceit.

‘For my own part,’ said Lord Huntley, ‘though I cannot but own that there was somewhat very extraordinary in the declaration he made to Miss Jessamy, yet it is certain that love was the only excuse he could allege for what he had done; and I am apt also to think it might be the real motive too, when I remember what Mr. Dryden says upon this subject—

“That love all sense of right and wrong confounds;
“Strong love and proud ambition have no bounds.”

Mr. Lovegrove replied, that he had the honour to agree with his lordship’s sentiments in this point. ‘But,’ cried Lady Speck, ‘would any man besides himself, after the most plain detection of his villainy, have had the folly and the arrogance to appear before a woman whom he was conscious had so much reason both to detest and scorn him?’—‘Perhaps, Madam,’ answered he, ‘Mr. Bellpine had been just reading Shakespeare’s Richard the Third, and flattered himself with being able to say like that prince, after courting Lady Ann—

“Was ever woman in this humour woo’d?
“Was ever woman in this humour won?”

‘But,’ continued he, ‘though I can very easily believe that love might be one inducement, yet I can scarce think it was the only one: I have been told, that Bellpine’s circumstances are not in the most prosperous condition; he

‘might hope to mend them by Miss Jessamy’s fortune; and it therefore appears to me extremely probable, that the lady’s money had, at least, as great an influence over him as her eyes.’

From this they fell into a conversation concerning the practice of fortune-hunting, and the stratagems to which men of desperate circumstances, and enterprising heads, have sometimes recourse, in order to gain their point. This was a copious subject, and afforded a great variety of diverting stories, no way to the advantage either of the deceiver or deceived. These, with some animadversions of the company upon them, lasted till they arrived at Sittingbourne; where, a servant having been sent before, as indeed the same care was afterwards taken at every stage, they found an elegant entertainment ready prepared against their coming. The next day they dined at Canterbury, reached Dover the same evening, and the ensuing morning embarked for Calais, to which port a prosperous gale safely conducted them in a few hours. But there is no necessity to oblige my readers to accompany them through the whole course of their journey to Paris, as no material incident happened in it. On the very dawning of that day which was to conclude their progress, Lord Huntley sent a servant to Paris, in order to apprise Sir Robert Manley of their approach; and, as he doubted not but he had provided a place for their reception, to take directions from him where they should alight, and then to return with his answer to a little town within two leagues of the city, where they intended to bait, and would stay for him. This was easily performed, as the fellow had an excellent horse under him, and set out several hours before the company.

Sir Robert was at dinner with Jemmy and some other gentlemen, when a waiter of the house informed him that there was a man on horseback at the door, who entreated to speak with him, and said he came from Lord Huntley; on which he rose up immediately, and went down. Jemmy started at the name of Lord Huntley; but not being able to assure himself that his ears had not deceived him, ran to the window which commanded the court-yard, where he indeed saw Sir Robert talking with a
man,

man, who he knew, by his livery, belonged to that nobleman, and seemed as if but just come off a journey. This put a sudden thought into his head, which, pleasing as it was, he durst not too much encourage, for fear of a disappointment. 'What!' cried he to Sir Robert, on his returning into the room, 'is Lord Huntley in Paris?'—'No,' replied the other; 'but very near it; he will be here by night.'—'I hear he is married,' returned Jemmy, strangely agitated: 'I suppose he brings his lady with him?'—'I shall soon see that,' said Sir Robert, with a smile; 'for I must go to meet him, and shall be glad if you will accompany me.'—'I am always ready to attend you any where, Sir Robert,' answered he: 'but there is but little of a compliment in my doing so at this time; because I cannot help flattering myself with meeting some company to whom I am better known than either to Lord Huntley or his lady.' Sir Robert could not keep himself from laughing at these words, but made no reply; and only said he must send out to hire a chariot immediately: on which a gentleman who was present told him he had one at the door that should be perfectly at his service; and as he seemed in haste, and the horses were ready put to, desired he would make use of it.

Sir Robert, for the reasons urged by the gentleman, readily accepted his offer; and, after taking leave of the company, and giving some private orders to a servant, went with Jemmy into the chariot; which, though it carried them with all imaginable celerity, seemed yet too slow to the impatience of one of them.

On their arrival, they were presently ushered into the room, where our travellers had but just got in before them. Jemmy flew to Jenny, as if no other person had been present; and, throwing himself upon her bosom, cried, in the utmost ecstasy—'My dear, dear Jenny! this is an unhopèd-for blessing!'—'My dear Jemmy!' returned she, 'I did not expect to see you till I came to Paris: but I am fairly caught in my own snare; I thought to have surprized you, and am surprized myself!' On this he fell a second time upon her neck; and who knows how long, forgetful of every thing but love and joy, he might have continued in

that tender situation, if Sir Robert Manley, having by this time paid his compliments to Lord Huntley, Mr. Lovegrove, and their ladies, had not advanced to do the same to Jenny, saying—'Dear Jessamy, you must not think, as yet, of engrossing this lady wholly to yourself.' These words reminded Jemmy of what was due from him to the rest of the company; which debt he discharged with an air of freedom and politeness too natural to him for his late transports to render less so. They staid no longer here than was necessary to take some refreshment; and, on their arrival at Paris, were conducted by Sir Robert Manley to the hotel he had hired for them; which they found so handsome and commodious, that they told him he was certainly the best quarter-master in Europe.

After having led them through several apartments, he brought them into a spacious room, where a table (being already set out) was immediately covered, by directions he had before-hand given, with the most exquisite viands of the season. This was a piece of gallantry which, as well as they knew Sir Robert, they had little expected, or even thought on.

Some hours were past in a continual round of wit and pleasantry, intermixed with more serious demonstrations of love, gratitude, and friendship; but the gentlemen, remembering how long a journey the ladies had come, thought it would be neither kind nor complaisant to keep them from their beds too late; though it may easily be supposed that Jemmy took a very reluctant leave of his dear Jenny, and that she also would have willingly spared some time from her repose, to have been entertained by a lover so much and so deservedly beloved.

C H A P. XXVI.

AFFORDS LESS THAN PERHAPS MAY BE EXPECTED, YET ENOUGH TO SATISFY A REASONABLE READER.

JEMMY's impatience to entertain his fair mistress brought him the next morning to visit her in her own apartment: but, as their conversation consisted only of such things as the reader is already well acquainted with,

it would be needless to repeat it here; so I shall only say, that all which can be conceived of soft and tender passed between them. He thought that he could never sufficiently acknowledge the proofs she had given him of her affection; nor the too much return those she had received from him. Sweet are the charms of mutual love, when inspired by merit, and accompanied by virtue. Neither of them, however, suffered themselves to be so absorbed in mutual endearments as to forget the respect owing to their friends. Jenny had no sooner heard that the company had left their chambers than she proposed joining them; and Jemmy had conceived so high an idea of Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove, on the character given of them by Sir Robert Manley, that he rejoiced in this opportunity of entering into a more particular acquaintance with them.

On their going into the dining-room, they found Sir Robert Manley was also come to pay the salutations of the morning, and enquire how they intended to pass the day; to which the ladies replied, that they could not pass it more agreeably than in the situation he had provided for them, especially as their women had not yet had time to regulate their things in a proper manner to appear in publick; and that, if he and Mr. Jessamy would give them their company, they should think it no confinement to stay at home. This being readily agreed to, feasting, cards, and conversation, engrossed the hours till the night was pretty far advanced; nor were the gentlemen permitted to depart without a promise of returning the next day.

Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove had hitherto been entire strangers to Jemmy; but they now found enough in his conversation to make them think themselves happy in his acquaintance; and he, as well as Sir Robert Manley, was never left out in any party of pleasure formed by them: in a word, though they continued in different lodgings, they seemed but as one family. They all went together to visit the churches and convents, to the opera, the comedy, the Thuilleries, the gardens of Luxembourg; made frequent tours to Marli, Fontainebleau, and Versailles: not a day passed over without some new

amusement; and time slid on in a perpetual round of pleasure.

Lord Huntley, who had been several times before at Paris, had a pretty large acquaintance among persons of the best fashion: these hearing of his marriage and arrival, came to visit him, and likewise introduced their wives and daughters to the ladies; so that there was frequently a very large and brilliant assembly of both sexes at the hotel. Lady Huntley and Lady Speck had their share of admiration among the connoisseurs; but Jenny seemed, in the eyes of most of them, greatly to outshine both her fair companions: she was toasted and distinguished by the name *La Belle Angloise*. Jemmy was ravished at the fine things he heard said of her; and the more so, as he found she was not the least elated by the praises she received.

This crowd of company, this incessant hurry of accumulated diversions, however, deprived our lover of the opportunity of entertaining his dear mistress in private as often as the pleasure he took in her conversation above all others made him wish to do; and, it is probable, this restriction filled him with much more impatience than ever he felt before for the consummation of their marriage. One day, when he found himself alone with her, he failed not to press her in the most strong terms he was able on that article; but she replied, that it was then neither a fit time nor place for such a thing; and that she wished he would not think of it till they should return to England. ‘Why not a fit time and place, my dear Jenny?’ said he. ‘Can there be any time or place unfit to solemnize a covenant made so long ago for us by our parents? A covenant which, I hope, the expectation of fulfilling has always been equally agreeable to ourselves. Remember,’ continued he, kissing her hand, ‘the transporting promise you made in one of your kind epistles, that, if I could not go to you, you would come to me, and the ambassador’s chaplain should complement my happiness.’—‘When I made that promise,’ answered she, ‘I meant nothing more than to observe it religiously; and should have contented myself to have lived in a continual banishment with you: but, my dear
Jemmy,

'Jemmy, the case, thank Heaven! is now quite altered; the circumstances of our affairs have changed their face; the wretch Bellpinc is recovered; no danger threatens your return; and, as we have been here already two months, it cannot be supposed we shall stay much longer: wherefore, then, should we hurry thus precipitately into a marriage while in a foreign land, and absent from the greatest part of our friends?'

She had scarce ended these words, when Lady Huntley came into the room; but, on seeing them together, was about to retire immediately, crying, she would not interrupt their conversation. Jenny called to her to stay; and Jemmy, recollecting how much she had been his friend, in a discourse of the like nature just after her coming from Bath, told her that her ladyship's presence would be so far from giving any interruption, that it was highly necessary to decide a little dispute between him and Miss Jessamy. 'I guess the subject,' answered she, with a smile; 'and, if I am to be arbiter, shall not fail to give it on your side the question, as I shall then be sure of obliging both parties.'—'You may be mistaken,' cried Jenny, and was going on; but Jemmy, who would have the advantage of being first heard, remonstrated to the fair judge all the inquietudes of an ever hoping, ever expecting, and never gratified, passion, and all the anxieties attending impatience and suspense. The manner in which he expressed himself had so much of the humorous in it, mixed with the pathetick, as made both the ladies laugh heartily. Jenny, in her turn, repeated the reasons she had for denying her lover's request in terms no less sprightly; after which—'Well,' said Lady Huntley, 'this is a moot-point; and I must even leave it where I found it; and the room, that you may agree upon it between yourselves.'

She was going to do as she said, and had turned away for that purpose.—'Hold, Lady Huntley!' cried Jenny; 'you must not depart till I have convinced you of my generosity to this unreasonable man.—Here,' continued she to Jemmy, 'is my hand, which I faithfully promise to give you before a parson as soon as we arrive at Lon-

don, and things can be got ready for the ceremony.' Jemmy received and kissed it with the greatest satisfaction. 'This is as it should be,' said Lady Huntley; 'and, to heighten your contentment, Mr. Jessamy, I can tell you that I believe you will very shortly have an opportunity to demand the performance of this promise. For my own part, I begin to be weary of Paris; Mr. Lovegrove, I can perceive, is so too; and, if we can persuade Lady Speck to be of the same opinion, I know I can easily bring my lord into it.' She was going on, when Lord Huntley came in with a letter in his hand. 'Oh, my dear!' cried he, 'I have been looking for you through all the rooms. I have just received a letter from Sir Thomas Welby.'—'I hope mamma is well!' cried she hastily; 'and no ill accident has happened?'—'Not in the least,' returned he; 'but far on the contrary. Sir Thomas only writes to let us know that his son is married, and will very shortly bring his bride to visit us in Paris.'

'I am astonished!' cried Lady Huntley; 'Mr. Welby married! I do not understand how such a thing can be! He took leave of mamma and I just after my coming from Bath, and told us he was to set out on his travels the next day; and I thought that he was gone! Sure, he must either have made a very short tour, or have stopped in his progress, and have picked up a wife by the way!'—'I know nothing of the particulars,' resumed his lordship; 'but you shall hear what Sir Thomas says on the occasion.' With these words he looked over the letter; and, singling out that part of it which he thought would most satisfy her curiosity, read as follows.

'I thought him too young to marry; but found his inclinations so much divided between love and travelling, that the latter would have afforded him neither pleasure nor improvement without the gratification of the former; so consented to both. He was married last week; and two days ago set out on his rambles, and has taken his bride with him. As they intend to stay some time at Paris in their way to Italy, and other parts, he will have the honour to present her to the ladies;

‘and I flatter myself she will appear not unworthy of their countenance and friendship.’

‘Well, this is strange!’ said she, perceiving he had done; ‘but he does not mention to whom he is married.’—‘Not a syllable,’ replied he; ‘but we shall soon know more of the matter; for I find, by the date of this letter, which I did not observe before, that it has been retarded by some accident or other in the post; and the young gentleman, by the time mentioned of his leaving London, must infallibly be already arrived, or very near it.’

These words had but just escaped his lips, when a servant came hastily into the room, and said that a gentleman, who called himself Welby, was in the great saloon with Lady Speck and Mr. Lovegrove, and they sent him to let his lordship know it. On this, Lord and Lady Huntley went to receive their new guest; but Jemmy and Jenny, having no acquaintance with them, thought themselves excused from paying their compliments to him at this time.

C H A P. XXVII.

CONTAINS A VERY REMARKABLE OCCURRENCE.

MR. Welby made his first visit very short; but was not suffered to depart without engaging himself to come again the next day, and bring his lady, whom they were not a little impatient to see, as Sir Thomas had mentioned her handsomely in his letter.

The daughters of Lady Wingman had a sincere regard for this young gentleman, not only as he was the son of Sir Thomas Welby, but also on the score of his own good qualities; and, willing to testify it by all the marks in their power, gave orders to those who had the management of their household affairs, to omit nothing proper for the entertainment of the new-wedded pair.

Three was the appointed hour; and it had not elapsed as many minutes when their expected guests appeared. The bride seemed very lovely in the eyes of Lord Huntley, Jemmy, and Sir Robert Manley; but there was something in her which attracted those of Mr. Lovegrove and the ladies. Each of these was perfectly convinced that

they had been acquainted with her face, though when or where none of them could recollect: but when she spoke, in returning the salutations they severally gave her, her voice immediately eased them of the suspense they had been in, and presented her to their remembrance for the fair stranger whom accident and distress had brought into their company at the village where they had been obliged to lie on their return from Bath. Great was their astonishment, nor was that of Mrs. Welby less; but as they had too much politeness to betray any part of theirs, or take the least notice they had ever seen her before, so she had too much generosity not to avow her remembrance of them.

‘It was with a great deal of pleasure I came,’ said Mrs. Welby, ‘to pay my respects to the friends of Mr. Welby; but how infinitely would that pleasure have been enhanced, had it been possible for me to have foreseen I should have met with the only persons to whom I have been so highly obliged in the extremest exigence in my life!’ Then perceiving they made no other reply, as indeed they were not yet enough recovered from their surprize to do it—‘You may not, perhaps,’ resumed she, ‘be able presently to distinguish in the wife of Mr. Welby the once forlorn, the distressed fugitive; but this will be to me a perpetual memento of your goodness.’ In speaking these last words, she took out of her pocket the snuff-box she had exposed to sale at the inn, and which Mr. Lovegrove had bought and returned to her with so much gallantry. On sight of it—‘It will be a lasting honour to me, Madam,’ said that gentleman, ‘that you still retain a trifle no other wife worthy your acceptance than by being before in your possession.’

The two sisters now first acknowledged their remembrance of her, with many compliments on the change of her condition; and Jenny, who had been impatient to do so, congratulated her good fortune with the extremest warmth. Those of the company who were not in the secret, were surprized at these salutations; but Mr. Welby, most of all; which his fair wife perceiving—‘You have introduced me,’ said she, ‘to persons whom I little hoped to have met at Paris. but would have gone much farther to have seen: I shall

‘ I shall at leisure make you acquainted with the obligations I have to them.’

Dinner being that instant served up, broke off all farther speech upon this head; but the ladies were all the time in the utmost impatience to know the bottom of an affair which at present seemed so mysterious to them; and as soon as the cloth was removed, left the gentlemen to their Burgundy, and drew Mrs. Welby into another room, not doubting but she would readily gratify their curiosity; which she accordingly did in the following manner.

THE SEQUEL OF THE FAIR STRANGER'S ADVENTURES.

‘ WHAT you desire of me,’ said she, ‘ is so little worthy your attention, that I shall be as brief as possible in the repetition: you already know the catastrophe of my fate, in seeing me the wife of the most generous man on earth; as for the accidents that made me so, they will only serve to shew, that when we think ourselves farthest removed from happiness we are often nearest to it.’

‘ You may remember, ladies, that I told you my design was to cross the sea from Bristol to Cork; I got safe, without the least molestation, to the end of my journey: but was fortunately prevented from embarking on my voyage by this means; I had scarce time to enquire if any vessel was bound for my intended port, when that aunt to whom I was going landed from thence; she came into the same inn where I was; we were mutually astonished at the sight of each other; but I soon related to her the whole of my unlucky story, and the disappointment it was to me to see her come to England in the very moment I was flying for refuge to her in Ireland; at which she seemed equally surprized and troubled.’

‘ At first she highly blamed me for resisting so foolishly my good fortune, as she termed it; but, perceiving I burst into tears at her reproaches, became more gentle. She told me, however, that it would be quite improper for me to go to her house while she was out of it, as my uncle had never seen me, and as I was an entire stranger to every one in the fa-

mily. “ But,” said she, “ you shall go back to London with me; I shall see your father soon after I come there, will talk to him concerning you, and doubt not but I shall be able to mitigate matters between you, so as you may go home again without being forced to marry against your inclinations.”

‘ This did not well please me, as I knew my father’s positive temper, and feared the success of her negotiation in this point: however, as I had no course to take, I was obliged to submit to her directions, and the next day we set out together in the stage-coach for London. On our arrival we were lodged at the house of an eminent banker in the city, who had before been apprized of my aunt’s coming, by letters for that purpose: she told him nothing more of me than that I was her niece, nor did he think it his business to ask any questions, but treated me with a great deal of civility and respect; and, as I was a perfect stranger in that part of the town, I thought myself as secure there as if I had been in Ireland.’

‘ The next day my aunt went to visit my father; but he happened to be gone out of town for a few days, and she found only my sister, who, on her making some enquiry for me, told her, that I was an impudent slut; that after having promised to marry a gentleman of great worth and fortune, and every thing being prepared for the ceremony, I had run away in a most scandalous manner on the very day it was to have been performed; that nobody knew what was become of me; that I had almost broke my father’s heart, and was a disgrace to all that belonged to me.’

‘ As I knew the bitterness of my sister’s nature, and the small portion of good-will she always had for me, I was not at all surprized when my aunt returned with this intelligence; I was only sorry that my father was not at home, that I might have known in what manner he repented my behaviour; for as I had never failed in the dutious love of a child to a parent, the thoughts of having been compelled to incur his displeasure gave me the most severe affliction and remorse. While I was in this suspense, an accident befel me, which, though

‘ though I thought little of at that time, proved afterwards to be one of the greatest importance in my whole life. My aunt was gone one day to her lawyer, on the business which had brought her to England; I was sitting reading at a window, when a servant at the banker’s shewed a gentleman into the room, and desired him to sit down, saying he expected his master home in a few minutes. I rose from my seat at the entrance of this stranger, but was pretty much surprized when I presently recollected he was the person who had followed me from church one Sunday to my father’s door. You may remember, ladies,” continued she, that I mentioned this incident to you on account of my sister’s reproaching me with it afterwards.’

‘ I remember it perfectly well,’ said Lady Speck; ‘ and I dare answer that no part of your story was lost on any of us. But, pray, proceed; for I already begin to trace the oddness of this event.’ Mrs. Welby smiled, and went on.

‘ I would have left the room,’ resumed she, ‘ but an unaccountable something rivetted my feet; the gentleman at first seemed in more confusion than myself, but he soon recovered from it; and seeing I had a book in my hand, approached me, and with an air the most gay, yet respectful—“ May I presume, Madam,” said he, “ to ask what author is so happy as to engage your contemplations?” I replied, it was only a novel, entitled Love and Duty reconciled. This, he has since told me, he looked upon as a prosperous omen to his hopes: but he had no opportunity then to say any thing farther; the banker came that instant in, begged his pardon for having made him wait, and told him, that as they should now be too late for the office, if he would accept of a bad dinner with him, they would go together in the afternoon. The gentleman very readily agreed; while they were talking, my aunt came in, and the cloth being already spread, we all sat down to table.

‘ My aunt was so much disconcerted that she could scarce eat; which the banker taking notice of, she burst into the most vehement exclamations against her lawyer. The young gentleman, who by this time had found

‘ how nearly she was related to me, asked her many questions concerning the behaviour of the person she complained of; and she then gave him a long detail of particulars, which, as they are no way material to my story, I shall not trouble you with a repetition of; and shall only tell you, that she concluded with saying, that Mr. Dally was one of the most base as well as most unmannerly men in the world. “ Mr. Dally!” cried he; “ I know him well; my father has been long his client, and I believe is the best friend he has: if you will permit me to wait on you to him, I dare almost promise to engage him to do you justice.”

‘ She was quite transported at this offer, and joyfully accepted it; on which he assured her he would come the next morning, and attend her to Mr. Dally’s chambers. There passed no more; soon after dinner he went out with the banker on the business they had been talking of, which I afterwards found was to the Million Bank, where he had some money left him on the death of a relation.

‘ On the banker’s return, my aunt could not forbear asking the name of the gentleman who had been so obliging to her; to which he replied, that he was the only son of Sir Thomas Welby; and then ran into great encomiums on the father and the son, though no more than what I have since experienced they justly merited. I was, however, very much confounded; for I must now acquaint you, ladies, that Sir Thomas Welby is the person, the history of whose liking of me I have already told you, since it was he I took so much pains to fly.’

Here they all cried out in the utmost amazement, almost at the same time—‘ What, Madam, Sir Thomas Welby!’ —‘ My guardian!’ said Lady Huntley: ‘ Was it to him you should have been married?’

‘ The same indeed,’ replied she; ‘ nor is it strange you should be ignorant such a thing was in agitation: for, even had it been effected, it was to have been kept a secret from his own family till I had been carried home, and set at the head of it. But I shall now proceed to the more agreeable part of my narrative: Mr. Welby came, agreeable to his promise, and ushered

“ offered my aunt to the lawyer’s. She returned about noon in very high spirits; told me that Mr. Welby’s presence, and what he said, had wrought a wonderful effect; that the lawyer was now as civil as before he had been rude; and that her business would be dispatched in a very short time. “ But, my dear niece,” said she, “ I have something better than all this to inform you of: this fine young gentleman is violently in love with you; he has made me the confidante of his passion, and engaged my interest. “ What now?” pursued she, seeing me look a little grave, “ surely you will not withstand your fortune a second time?” I replied, that I could see but a little advantage in that gentleman’s affections, since it was impossible his father would ever give a sanction to it. “ Pish! what then?” resumed she. “ When once you are married to him, the father will easily be brought to forgive what cannot be recalled.”

“ I urged the vanity of hoping a father would ever forgive a son for marrying the woman he had a mind to himself; but she made slight of all I said, and then told me, that as it was not proper the banker should, as yet, be let into the secret, she had promised to give Mr. Welby a meeting that afternoon, and to bring me with her. “ Neither your pride nor modesty,” continued she, “ has any cause to be alarmed; for I shall pretend it is all my doing, and that you knew nothing of seeing him.”

“ I was very averse to this meeting; but she was positive, and I was fearful of disobliging her, as I had no other friend but herself whom I could rely upon for making my peace with my father. In short, we went; Draper’s Garden was the place of rendezvous; Mr. Welby was there before us. He affected, as had been contrived between my aunt and him, to have come there by chance; which a little saved my blushes. After walking a turn or two, talking on ordinary matters, he proposed going to Ranelagh: my aunt replied, that she had never seen the place, and could not do it in better company. It did not become me to oppose what she had agreed to; a coach waited, which carried us directly thither. It was very

early in the evening, and the company were not yet come, so we had the gardens to ourselves. My aunt was so much in his interest, or rather mine, that she gave him all the opportunities the place would admit of to declare his passion to me; which he did in the most pathetick terms, while she pretended to amuse herself with looking on the story of Pamela, painted on the walls. I was far from giving any encouragement to what he said; yet, by an irresistible impulse, was prevented from treating it with that severity I wished to have done.

“ But why should I detain your attention by particulars? This meeting was productive of a second, that of a third, and so on for a succession of several days; till at last, finding in myself an inclination to be too much pleased with his addresses, and dreading the consequence, I resolved to put an end to them.

“ I took the first opportunity of being alone with him, to tell him, that I had considered of the honour he did me, and found it impossible for me to accept the hand he offered; so entreated him to withdraw his affection, if in reality he had so much for me as he pretended, and talk to me no more upon that subject. The manner in which I spoke convincing him I was in earnest, he seemed much amazed; made such replies as might be expected from a lover; accused destiny, and the influence of ill stars; complained of his want of power to please me, and laid the blame of my refusal on my aversion to his person. This struck me; and, in the sincerity of my soul—“ No, Sir,” said I; “ wrong not your own merits, or my just sense of them, so far as to harbour such a thought: I blush not to confess that, of all mankind, you have the preference in my heart; but what avails it, when there is a bar between us, which all the love in the world, on both sides, would never be able to surmount?”—“ Ah, Madam!” cried he hastily, “ what bar?” I then told him, that I was determined never to marry without the consent of my parents. “ If that be all,” rejoined he briskly, “ I do not despair but to be able to make such proposals to your father as he will not disdain to listen to.”—“ How

“ ever

"ever that may be," answered I, "you, Sir, have a father too; it is his consent I chiefly mean; and without his permission of the continuance of your addresses, be assured I will not receive them."

"He now seemed much disconcerted, sighed, and was silent for several minutes. "Well, Madam," said he, "you shall be obeyed: my thoughts were lately bent on travelling; every thing was ready for my design; but on the sight of you, love laid a sudden embargo on my feet, and I then made a thousand excuses to my father for deferring my voyage; but I will now confess to him the whole truth, and implore his sanction to my vows: he is generous, I am his only son, he loves me, and I may perhaps succeed; I will, at least, make trial of my fate, and to-morrow you will see either the most happy or the most miserable of men."

"He parted from me with great emotions, nor was I less disquieted; but I acquainted not my aunt with this conversation, knowing she would severely chide me, and think, as indeed I did myself, that the step I had taken would entirely overthrow what she had taken so much pains to promote. I neither saw nor heard any thing of my lover all the next day, and this confirmed me in what before I scarce doubted. I passed the night in anxieties enough; but the morning found my condition reversed, in a manner which I could never have imagined. Soon after breakfast my father's footman came in a great hurry to acquaint me that my father commanded me to return home immediately: I was in a strange surprize; I knew not before he was in town, could not guess by what means he was directed where to find me, and was in the utmost dilemma whether I ought to rejoice or tremble at being sent for. I would fain have staid for my aunt, who was just gone out, to have taken her with me; but the fellow told me that his orders were to bring me that instant; so I said no more, but obeyed the summons.

"On my arrival, my father met me in the parlour; I threw myself at his feet, and begged forgiveness. "Rise, my child," said he, embracing me; "I do forgive you; the hand of Hea-

ven has been in what you have done, and directed all your steps: your fears of a second marriage are now over. Sir Thomas has resigned his claim to one fitter for your years: they are both here, and wait your presence to ratify the contract I have already made for you."

"Judge, ladies, what I felt: I was no longer at a loss for the happy event; the sudden surcharge of unexpected joy rushing in at once upon me, was more than I could well support. I was almost fainting when my father led me into the next room, where sat Sir Thomas Welby and his son: the latter, as I have since heard, was in much the same condition as myself; but the former, pitying my confusion, took me by the hand with these words, delivered in the most sprightly tone—"Come, daughter," said he, "for such you now are, your father has given you to me; and the least I can do, to atone for the troubles I have occasioned you, is to give my son to you, and hope you will not refuse to accept the present." As he spoke this, he joined my hand with his son's, and added—"Take each other, and be as happy as love and mutual consent of parents can make you." Neither of us could speak for some time; but when we had recovered ourselves enough to do so, the acknowledgments we made were very well received by both the old gentlemen. As there wanted but little preparations for a marriage so much desired on all sides, the ceremony was performed in three days after: and I have now nothing more to acquaint you with, but that Mr. Welby still persisting in his desires of seeing foreign parts, I have gladly consented to accompany him in his travels."

CHAP. XXVII.

CONCLUDES THIS HISTORY, AND ALL THE AUTHOR THINKS FIT, AT PRESENT, TO INTRUDE UPON THE PUBLICK.

AFTER Mrs. Welby had finished the account of her adventures, and received the praises due to her conduct through the whole of them, she returned

returned into the dining-room; where finding Mr. Welby had entertained the gentlemen in much the same manner as his wife had done the ladies, the conversation on this subject became general; and when they discoursed more at large on the odd circumstances of what they had heard related, and considered the generosity of Sir Thomas Welby, the disinterested passion of his son, and the extraordinary discretion of the young lady, they were at a loss to say which of the three characters had the greatest claim to admiration.

These new comers now found themselves so happy in the society of those they were among, that, till the expiration of full three weeks, they seemed not to remember they had any farther course to steer; nor did their friends think it too great an act of complaisance either to revisit with them all the places they had seen before, or to stay in Paris much longer than they had intended, or would have done, but for so agreeable an addition to their company.

At length, however, they were obliged to separate. Mr. Welby and his fair wife began their progress towards the Alps, in order to pass into Italy; and the other gentlemen and ladies, now equally impatient to be at home as they had been to go abroad, set out in a few days after on their return to England, where they happily arrived without meeting any accidents to retard their journey.

This agreeable company now ceased to be of one family. Lord Huntley and Mr. Lovegrove took their ladies home, and Sir Robert Manley and our lovers returned to their respective habitations, to receive the visits of those friends and acquaintance from whom they had so long been absent. Jemmy, however, was seldom from his dear Jenny, and had now a full opportunity to remind her of the promise she had made him; and that amiable lady, thinking they had sufficiently proved the love and sincerity of each other, no longer sought excuses to delay what he desired.

But before we bring them to the altar, it may not be improper to acquaint the reader with something concerning Bellpine, as he was the person who had taken so much pains to hinder their felicity from being ever completed, and

has, on that score, made too considerable a figure in this history to be wholly dropped.

The expences of his way of living having by much exceeded the slender income of his patrimony, he found himself obliged to mortgage for near half the value, in order to discharge several debts which had begun to be very troublesome to him, and had exposed him to repeated insults.

But this was a trifling misfortune, when compared with that which soon ensued: Lady Hardy had declared herself pregnant; which so enraged him, that, not remembering the advice given him by the old housekeeper, he plainly accused his aunt of incontinency, and for proofs of his allegation against her, related all the good woman had revealed to him, and also all he knew concerning the passion she pretended to have felt for Jemmy.

But he was presently convinced of the error he had been guilty of in this rash behaviour: Sir Thomas, either not believing, or not seeming to do so, treated all he said as a base forgery, and flew into the extremest rage; forbade him coming any more into his presence, or even to think of him as an uncle; and at the same time bound himself by the most solemn imprecation, that whether the child his lady went with should live or die, to take such measures as should infallibly prevent the villain who had so infamously traduced her, from ever inheriting any part of his estate.

Thus undone in all his future expectations, and reduced to an incapacity of living in a fashion equal to his birth, and much more to that of his ambition, it is not to be doubted but that he suffered all that despair and enervate rage could inflict upon him.

In this condition, the only method his invention could supply him with to avoid poverty, and it's sure attendant the contempt of the world, was to sell an estate which he found by much too inconsiderable for his support, and get into the army. He accordingly did so, paid off the mortgage upon it, and with the remainder of the money he received for the purchase, bought a captain of foot's commission in a marching regiment; which, to add to his misfortune, was presently after ordered to one of the settlements in the East Indies, and he was obliged to leave England, with

all its dear delights, and embark for the Coromandel coast some weeks before our lovers returned from France: a punishment which his own pride and luxury had brought upon him, and was justly due to the complicated vices of so bad a heart.

Jemmy was a little affected at this piece of intelligence; but Jenny, who thought him capable of every thing that was base and wicked, and had not been altogether free from apprehensions of some mischief which his revenge and malice might possibly be productive of, could not forbear rejoicing, in spite of all the good-nature she was endowed with, that a man of such dangerous propensities was so far removed.

Among other occurrences of less importance to her peace than this of Bell-pine, she was also informed, that Mrs. Marlove, whom, if the reader has forgot, he may find mentioned in the beginning of this work, was now separated from her husband, having first made him, by her over-delicacy and capricious temper, heartily weary of a state he had entered into with transport, and the prospect of a lasting happiness. She heard also that the marriage of Rodophil's mistress with the captain having been discovered, her father obliged them to live together; but that they agreed so ill, that the contentions between them made much diversion for

their neighbours; and that Miss Chit had quarrelled with her great Lady Fisk, on the score of a young nobleman, who had made his addreses to both, though neither could suffer herself to believe so; and that the animosity of these fair rivals was arrived to such a height, that they made no scruple of betraying to the world all the failings each had been guilty of, and of which they had been mutually the confidants.

But our amiable Jenny had now done enquiring into the follies and mistakes of her sex, as she had seen enough of both to know how to avoid them; and all the preparations for giving herself to Jemmy being now ready, their marriage was solemnized by her own desire, in the Abbey-church of Westminster, in the presence of Lord Huntley, Mr. Lovegrove, and their ladies; Sir Robert Manley and some other friends, among whom Mr. Ellwood and Mr. Morgan were not left out.

It would be needless to repeat the satisfaction which this happy catastrophe gave to every one who took any interest in the welfare of our accomplished lovers, or the sincere congratulations the new-united pair received upon it: I shall therefore leave them, after the hurry of feasting and visiting was over, to enjoy, in calm retirement, the more pure and lasting sweets of a well-governed and perfect tenderness.





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